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THE TIMES OF INDIA

INCLUDES 6 PAGES OF BANGALORE TIMES

INDIA'S LARGEST ENGLISH NEWSPAPER

Aryna Sabalenka claims her maiden **Indian Wells Open title** by defeating Elena Rybakina, who won their last four title clashes; **Jannik Sinner** beats Daniil Medvedev to claim the men's title, P 18

Union minister **Hardeep Singh Puri's daughter has approached Delhi HC seeking removal of "false" and "defamatory" social media content** linking her to convicted American sex offender Jeffrey Epstein, P 12

Nirmala Sitharaman says govt will soon come out with a **modified Stand-Up India scheme** to provide better benefits to SC/ST and women entrepreneurs looking **to set up new projects**

Political thriller **One Battle After Another** emerges **Best Picture** at the Academy Awards; **Michael B Jordan wins Best Actor** for Sinners performance, **Jessie Buckley** from Hamnet is Best Actress, SEE BANGALORE TIMES

The Times of India has launched Let's D-Stress, an initiative to help people maintain a healthy digital balance in their lives. It aims to spark a nationwide conversation on digital stress and inspire actionable change through science and technology, helping individuals reclaim attention, productivity, and mental well-being | P 12

HC raps Guj PSC for Arthashastra query from missing edition

The HC directed the Gujarat Public Service Commission to produce the first 1915 English translation of Arthashastra, over the correctness of an answer to a question it asked in a GPSC exam. But when GPSC failed to produce the edition, the court rapped it for being stubborn and egoistic. P 12

Govt nod to host IPL at Chinnaswamy

After months of uncertainty, Karnataka govt Monday gave KSCA the nod to host IPL 2026 matches at M Chinnaswamy Stadium. The first match will be on March 28 with RCB hosting Sunrisers Hyderabad. P 18

Hard Rock ends JSM ties; 10 cafes to shut

Hard Rock International has terminated its franchise agreements with JSM Corporation, which will shut 10 cafes in India, including three in Bengaluru. "You'll hear from us soon," JSM told **TOI**. P 3

Direct talks with Iran on ship passage yielded results: EAM

'No Blanket Deal, Clearance Is Case By Case'

Sachin.Parashar
@timesofindia.com

New Delhi: Amid calls by the US for a multinational naval coalition to secure the Strait of Hormuz, India Monday backed its own direct engagement with Iran for safe passage of ships, with external affairs minister S Jaishankar saying these talks have yielded "some results".

The ministry of external affairs (MEA) said there had been no talks with US or any other country on Washington's proposal for deployment of warships to escort vessels through the key energy route.

FULL COVERAGE: P 2, 8, 15, 16

Iran has so far allowed two India-flagged ships to cross the Strait, but 22 more Indian vessels still await clearance. Jaishankar, in Brussels for a meeting with counterparts from EU countries, told Financial Times there was no "blanket arrangement" with Iran on safe passage and "every ship movement is an individual happening".

"I am now engaged in talking to them and...(it) has yielded some results... If it is yielding results for me, I would naturally continue to look at it," said the minister.

▶Policing Hormuz, P 8

LPG SHIP ARRIVES; SENSEX REBOUNDS

- Govt says **India's domestic LPG production ramped up by 36%** in a fortnight to meet demand for domestic cylinders
- **Rupee** hovers near record lows, **closes at 92.42/$**, against last week's record low of 92.48
- Sensex up after drubbing of past 3 trading days, gains 938pts or 1.3% to settle at 75,502. Nifty gains 258 points
- **Israel's ambassador to India Reuven Azar rejects rumours of Netanyahu's death.** Says he has seen the Israeli PM recently

Photo: ANI

Shivalik, carrying 46,000 tonnes of LPG, arrives at Mundra Port

- Walmart-backed **PhonePe**, last valued at $12bn, **pauses IPO** amid market volatility
- Students of **1st batch of 1-yr exec MBA course at Dubai campus of IIM-A back** in city

Allies, China cold to Trump call for Hormuz coalition

President Trump claimed Monday that US had "literally obliterated" Iran's military capabilities, hitting more than 7,000 targets across the country since the conflict began. He also accused western partners of ingratitude as they rebuffed his call to send warships to escort vessels through the Strait of Hormuz.

Several countries, including Germany, Spain and Italy, said they had no immediate plans to send ships to Hormuz. "We've protected them from horrible outside sources, and they weren't that enthusiastic," Trump said. China ruled itself out and called on all nations to stop military operations in Middle East. P 16

Cross-voting helps NDA in RS polls in Odisha, Bihar

Counting On Hold In Haryana Over 'Secrecy Violation'

Ashok Pradhan, Madan Kumar & Manvir Saini | TNN

Rajya Sabha elections Monday accentuated the opposition's inability to hold its ranks, with absentee legislators costing the Grand Alliance a seat in Bihar, cross-voting delivering a bonus seat to BJP in Odisha and a dispute over ballot secrecy leaving the poll outcome in Haryana hanging.

In Bihar, Mahagathbandhan's lone candidate, RJD's Amarendra Dhari Singh, lost after four opposition legislators — three from Congress and one from RJD — stayed away from the election. Had they voted, Singh would have secured 41 votes against the required threshold of 40, instead of the 37 he polled. Bihar last saw an RS vote in 2014, when JD(U) candidates Pavan Varma and Gulam Rasool Balyawi overcame cross-voting by party MLAs to defeat BJP-backed independents.

▶Among winners, P 7

NITISH, NITIN IN

BIHAR | Outgoing CM Nitish Kumar, new BJP chief Nitin Nabin, Union minister Ram Nath Thakur, RLM chief Upendra Kushwaha and state BJP general secretary Shivesh Kumar win

ODISHA | Victories for BJP-backed Independent Dilip Ray, BJP's Manmohan Samal and Sujeet Kumar, and BJD's Santrupt Misra

If ministers can't answer questions, why come to House, asks K'taka Speaker

TIMES NEWS NETWORK

Bengaluru: Miffed with ministers over delay in replies to members' queries in the ongoing session, speaker UT Khader Monday adjourned the House and walked out in a huff. "This House is for lawmakers who meet once in three months to discuss their issues. All of them ask questions. If only 15 starred questions are answered, why should members come to the House? How do we run the House?" the Speaker said, demanding answers from ministers and secretaries.

Following the unprecedented adjournment, CM Siddaramaiah immediately met the Speaker. At a meeting of floor leaders, it was resolved to ensure lawmakers receive replies to questions in the House. Failing which, ministers and officials would face action.

▶To face music, P 4

Dubai suspends all foreign airlines' flights

Dubai Monday evening indefinitely suspended all flights operated by foreign airlines, after a fire broke out in a fuel tank near its international airport following multiple attacks.

The sudden closure led to many flights that were headed to Dubai, including Emirates' from Hyderabad and Thiruvananthapuram, returning to their port of origin. Later, Indian carriers cancelled all flights to Dubai till further notice. P 16

▶ Emirates flight from Chennai turns back, P 8

Indian crude hits $137, up 93% since start of conflict

Atul.Mathur@timesofindia.com

New Delhi: The cost of crude for Indian refiners has soared 93% since the conflict in the Gulf broke out on Feb 28 and hit $136.56 a barrel on Friday, eroding profits for domestic players ranging from IndianOil, HPCL and BPCL to Reliance Industries.

Several countries, including the US, let retail prices rise in line with increase in crude prices. In India, oil companies have so far kept pump prices unchanged and have taken a hit on their margins after pocketing gains for months.

It's unlikely that govt, which has been raking in revenue, will make any changes until March 31 to ensure that taxes and fiscal balance are in line with budget targets.

▶Basket of Brent, P 8

US 'okay' with some ships passing Hormuz

Oil prices eased about 1% Monday after the US said it would be fine with some **Iranian, Indian and Chinese ships** moving through the Strait of Hormuz and talk of possible additional releases from emergency reserves. P 16

BJP's Adhikari to take on Mamata on her home turf

BJP Monday named Bengal's opposition leader Suvendu Adhikari as its candidate from both Bhowanipore and Nandigram, where he defeated Mamata Banerjee by 1,956 votes in 2021 — a result under challenge in Calcutta HC. Mamata won Bhowanipore by a record margin of 58,832 votes the same year. Figuring in BJP's first list of 144 candidates is Soumitra Chattopadhyay, a 7th-generation descendant of Vande Mataram author Bankim Chandra Chattopadhyay. Soumitra will contest from Naihati. P 7

US report calls for sanctions on RAW, RSS; govt rejects it

TIMES NEWS NETWORK

New Delhi: Govt "categorically" rejected as motivated and biased the characterisation of India in the latest US Commission on International Religious Freedom (USCIRF) report that alleged deterioration of religious freedom in India and sought its designation as a country of particular concern.

The report had also called for sanctions on Research & Analysis Wing and Rashtriya Swayamsevak Sangh for their "responsibility and tolerance of severe violations of religious freedom by freezing those individuals' or entities' assets and/or barring their entry into US".

Govt said in its response that instead of persisting with selective criticism of India, USCIRF would do well to reflect on the incidents of vandalism and attacks on Hindu temples in US, selective targeting of India, and growing intolerance and intimidation of members of the Indian diaspora in US, which merit serious attention.

According to the report, religious freedom deteriorated in Indian in 2025.

▶Religious freedom, P 11

ICU blaze in Odisha hospital kills 12 patients

Ashok Pradhan, Diana Sahu & Hemanta Pradhan | TNN

Bhubaneswar/Cuttack: An electrical fire originating in the trauma unit of SCB Medical College and Hospital in Odisha's Cuttack at 2.40am Monday enveloped three floors within minutes, killing 12 patients and injuring 20 people. As the fire spread, staff at the state's oldest and largest govt-run tertiary healthcare facility scurried to evacuate 23 patients admitted to two ICUs.

▶Died in ICU beds, P 9

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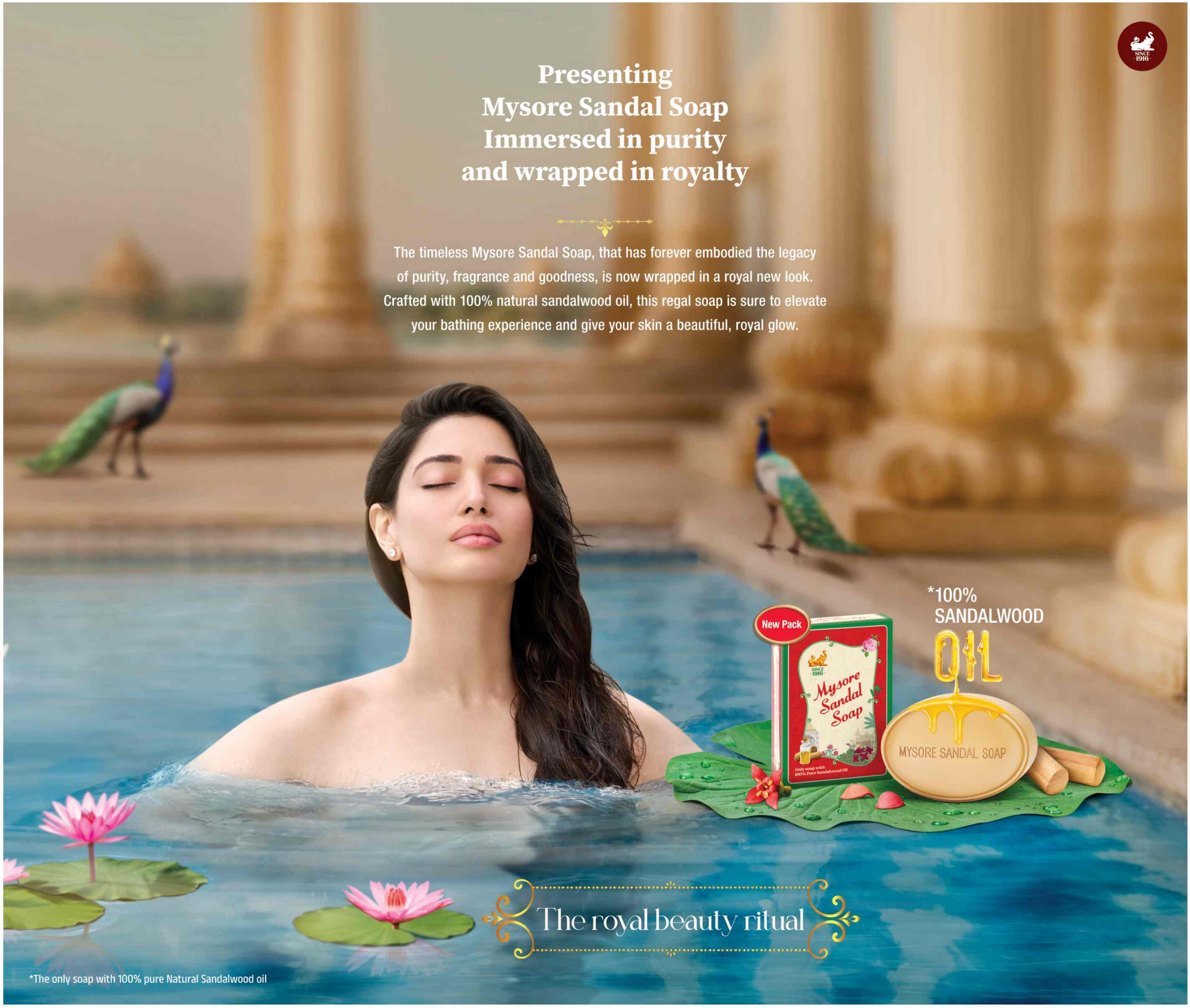

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Just 1k LPG cylinders for state's 1L eateries

Allocation Plan Leaves Hotel Sector Fuming

TIMES NEWS NETWORK

Bengaluru: The state govt's new priority-based LPG cylinder allocation plan appears to have pushed the hotel sector to the edge as barely 1,000 cylinders will be available daily for the 1 lakh-plus eateries across the state.

BURNER WOES

In the plan, rolled out Monday following discussions with representatives of oil distribution companies, the govt has put hospitals, student hostels, and educational institutions on top priority by allocating 60% of the total 7,000 cylinders available on a daily basis. The hotel sector comes third in the plan — after govt institutions, including KMF — with 14% allocation.

The move has not enthused the hotel sector. "In Bengaluru alone, there are around 45,000 eateries... the new cylinder allocation plan fails to support us," rued a representative of Bangalore Hotels' Association (BHA).

Meanwhile, food and civil supplies minister KH Muniyappa admitted that the situation on the supply side was worsening by the day and the govt was only acting on the plan approved by the Centre.

According to consumption data provided by oil marketing companies, Karnataka records an average daily commercial LPG demand of around 850 tonnes — equivalent to roughly 44,000 commercial cylinders (19kg equivalent) per day. However, as per indicative guidelines issued by the ministry of petroleum and natural gas, the state has placed 20% of this supply under regulated allocation during the current supply constraint. This translates to 181.3 tonnes per day, or 9,544 cylinders, earmarked for controlled distribution. Out of this, 7,000 cylinders have been allocated for commercial establishments daily, while 2,544 cylinders are reserved for the auto LPG sector.

"We had hoped the hotel sector would get a higher allocation from the 7,000 cylinders to be released daily, but we are disappointed. A thousand cylinders for eateries across the state does not help us," said BHA honorary president PC Rao. "We'll be writing to chief minister Siddaramaiah seeking more allocation to the sector," he added.

Syed Asif

SUPPLY CHAIN HIT: Food and civil supplies minister KH Muniyappa admitted the situation on the supply side is worsening by the day

As several eateries in Bengaluru struggle with the ongoing shortage of commercial LPG, some community kitchens have remained largely unaffected, thanks to sustainability decisions taken many years ago

How these kitchens have KEPT ON COOKING

From fossil fuels to biomass fuel

Sustainability choices helped Adamya Chetana, a community kitchen that prepares midday meals for thousands of schoolchildren. A gradual shift away from fossil fuels over the past 16 years has helped operations continue without disruption here.

Today, the kitchen uses briquettes made from agricultural and biomass waste to generate steam for cooking. The model reduces dependence on petroleum fuels and uses locally available waste as energy. Currently, Adamya Chetana is serving around 40,000 students in Bengaluru under the midday meal scheme. It also carries out annadaanam (free food supply) at 10 locations in the city.

Tejaswini Ananth, head of Adamya Chetana, said, "Our focus was on renewable energy and showing children that a kitchen can run without fossil fuels. Now, in a situation like this, it is helping us continue cooking without disruption."

Powered by renewable energy

All major kitchen operations — from restaurants and banquets to the staff cafeteria — at The Oterra Hotel in Electronics City use electric cooking systems. Its electricity comes from third-party wind and solar power suppliers connected to the state grid. The hotel's general manager, Srinivas Adiga, said: "All our cooking equipment runs on electricity, so the LPG crisis has not affected us at all."

This sustainability initiative was started nearly a decade ago. "Our aim was to reduce carbon emissions and move towards net zero. We didn't anticipate a situation like this, but the transition ensured that our operations continued without disruption," he said.

No gas, no burner, all AI

A commercial kitchen on Brigade Road is operating entirely on electric and AI-controlled cooking machines without using a single gas burner. It has automated everything — from vegetable chopping and marination to the final cooking of complicated dishes such as biryani.

Restaurateur Ananth Narayan, who developed this technology-driven kitchen for his bar-restaurant Just BLR, said: "Once the recipe is fed into the machine, it handles the entire process."

This setup has almost 30 specialised machines. Ingredients are first cleaned and chopped through automated systems before being transferred to programmable cooking machines that follow pre-fed recipes, controlling temperature, timing, and stirring with precision. The eatery uses a central kitchen model where dishes are cooked up to about 70% in bulk and then vacuum sealed and frozen to -18 degrees Celsius.

Once a food item is ordered, the chefs just add the required items into the machines and start them based on the recipe SOP that is pre-fed. "It takes less than 4-5 minutes to cook any dish, and all the 100+ items on our menu are pre-fed in our AI-controlled machines. Our bar is also completely automated, where one needs to just tap on the drink shown on the machine screen, and the drink is automatically mixed and given directly," he said.

This system, he said, ensures consistency, reduces waste, and eliminates dependence on LPG.

Smooth sailing at Akshaya Patra

Every morning, meals are cooked in the kitchens of Akshaya Patra Foundation across Bengaluru to feed about 1.5 lakh schoolchildren under the midday meal programme. These kitchens are operating smoothly, largely because two-thirds of them do not depend on LPG for cooking.

Of the six Akshaya Patra kitchens in Bengaluru, three run on biomass briquettes. These kitchens, located along Kanakapura Road and near Kempegowda International Airport, use compressed biomass fuel made of agricultural waste to power their large-scale cooking operations.

"About 90–95% of our cooking in Bengaluru does not rely on commercial LPG," said Naveena Neerada Dasa, executive director, strategy and international relations, Akshaya Patra Foundation, World Food Movement. "One has a direct gas pipeline connection. Only two smaller kitchens depend on LPG." According to him, the shift to alternative fuel sources was a conscious long-term strategy. "Our leadership anticipated possible fuel challenges years ago and encouraged us to adopt sustainable fuel sources. Because of that, even if LPG supply is disrupted, our kitchens can continue running," he said.

Text by: Hamsaveni N

Cafe's 'gas crisis charge' on lemonade bill triggers buzz

Nithya.Mandyam
@timesofindia.com

Bengaluru: 'When life gives you lemons, make lemonade,' there goes the adage. But how about a lemonade with a twist in the tale? Or, shall we say, with a sting in the tail in the form of 'gas crisis charge'?

A bill from a city cafe went viral on social media Sunday after a customer spotted this rather unusual entry on the receipt while paying for two mint lemonades, sparking online outrage and humour.

The Theo Cafe bill showed two mint lemonades priced at Rs 179 each. After a 5% discount of Rs 17.9, CGST and SGST at 2.5% each were added. However, what created a buzz was a separate 'gas crisis charge' of 5%, or Rs 17, added to the total, bringing the rounded-off final payable amount to Rs 374.

> Commercial gas cylinders cost nearly Rs 6,000 and there were concerns over supply in the morning. The system flagged it ['gas crisis charge'] as prediction, but we did not charge it. We also gave the customer a discount and the issue was fixed
>
> **Avinash** | CAFE OWNER

Cafe owner Avinash told **TOI** the entry appeared due to a system-generated billing update over the ongoing LPG supply shortage. He claimed the customer was never charged the extra amount. The clarification notwithstanding, an image of the bill made its way to microblogging platform X, where it triggered a flood of reactions from amused and annoyed users alike, with many questioning how cooking gas could have been involved in the making of lemonade in the first place?

One user on X, KTPeriPeri (@kaarnama13), joked: "Lemonade banane mein kaunsa gas lagta hai (what gas is required to prepare lemonade)." Another sarcastically posted: "Nimbu garam karke daala hai kya," wondering whether the lemons were heated before being squeezed in.

Others suggested, in a humorous vein, the cafe might have added gas inside the lemonade to make it fizzy.

Some users also raised legal concerns, arguing that such charges could amount to an unfair trade practice. One comment claimed adding such extra fees could violate provisions under the Consumer Protection Act, 2019.

Vessel brings 26k MT of LPG to M'luru

Vessel Shivalik arrived at the LPG terminal of Mundra Port in Gujarat Monday, with a total LPG quantity of 46,000 MT via the Strait of Hormuz. Of this, 20,000 MT will be unloaded at Mundra while 26,000 MT will be unloaded at New Mangalore Port in Mangaluru. The vessel is carrying liquid LPG ordered by Indian Oil Corporation Ltd.

Flight disruptions continue at KIA

Kempegowda International Airport (KIA) witnessed multiple flight disruptions Monday after airspace restrictions led to several cancellations. According to airport officials, a total of 24 flights — 13 arrivals and 11 departures — were cancelled. The affected services were largely on routes connecting Bengaluru with major West Asian hubs. Key sectors impacted included Abu Dhabi, Riyadh, Jeddah, Dammam, Dubai and Doha. Airport authorities said the cancellations were a direct result of airspace restrictions, which have forced airlines to suspend or reschedule some operations.

Istriwalas feel heat of West Asia war

Anush.S@timesofindia.com

Bengaluru: The geopolitical crisis thousands of kilometres away in West Asia is now having an unlikely impact in the heart of India's tech capital: unpressed clothes.

Across central Bengaluru, dozens of roadside pressers/ironers (istriwalas) say they are struggling to keep their irons hot, as commercial LPG cylinders have become scarce amid the ongoing supply crunch. The shortage has forced many to turn away customers and delay deliveries.

"I have started reducing the number of new orders for ironing," said Muthulakshmi P, 51, who runs a pushcart ironing stall on Rhenius Street in Richmond Town. "At this stage, I have fuel left barely for a week. Luckily for us, we took a new cylinder not long back. I work with my son; hence, we require two cylinders at a time. Now that he has gone to our hometown in Tamil Nadu, consumption is less."

Many of these small ironing stalls switched from coal-fired irons to LPG-powered ones during the peak of the Covid pandemic in 2021, when coal became difficult to source. Muthulakshmi too made the transition then, investing nearly Rs 16,000 in LPG-powered iron boxes. The switch made work far easier.

"Earlier, we used coal, which took at least 30 minutes to heat up. In the afternoon, if I want to take a break, this process has to be repeated. With LPG, it is as easy as heating a dosa tawa," she said. But now, the very convenience that helped them survive the pandemic is threatening their livelihood.

Around Richmond Town, several pressers say their irons may soon go cold if fresh cylinders do not arrive. Satyanarayan P, who has been ironing clothes in the area for nearly 30 years, says the crisis has forced them to think of alternatives. "I know it is expensive, but I'm willing to pay the bills if they can provide us with electric connections. That is the only way to survive now," he said, adding that he has even sought help from MLA NA Haris to facilitate power connections for roadside ironing stalls.

For some families, the situation is already critical. Subramaniam G, 46, and his wife Bhavani G, 38, say LPG will last barely two more days. "Both of us have been in this profession for the past two decades. We left whatever we had in Andhra and came to Bengaluru in search of a better living. But if this is the case, the only solution is to shut the cart and go back home. We already asked the customers to wait 15-20 days."

With these istriwalas not taking clothes, customers are worried as Richmond Town is dotted by college students and young professionals for whom pressed clothes make a big difference.

LEFT WRINKLED: Many roadside pressers/ironers in the city switched from coal-fired irons to LPG-powered ones during the peak of Covid-19

Man, 45, survives leopard attack

Bengaluru: A 45-year-old man was injured after a leopard attacked him Monday at Kalyanapura village, Nelamangala taluk, on the outskirts of Bengaluru, triggering fresh concern among residents over increasing wildlife movement in the area.

The injured person is Nagaraju, a resident of Sheerayyanapalya in Motaganahalli panchayat and secretary of a local cooperative milk dairy. According to residents, the incident occurred around 5am when Nagaraju stepped out of his house. The leopard, which had seemingly entered the locality in search of stray dogs, suddenly pounced on Nagaraju and scratched his chest. He managed to free himself and escape.

Nagaraju was later shifted to Nelamangala govt hospital. Doctors said his injuries were not life-threatening. Residents of Kalyanapura and surrounding villages said leopard sightings have became more frequent in recent months. They urged forest officials to rescue and relocate the big cat. TNN

Deadline extended

Bengaluru: Greater Bengaluru Authority (GBA) has extended till March 20 the deadline for citizens to submit complaints/objections on the revised draft voter list for elections to the five city corporations. The extension came after political parties submitted representations to GBA. TNN

Cleanliness drive

Bengaluru: Bengaluru Central city corporation will launch a large-scale cleanliness drive from Tuesday as part of the Swachh Survekshan campaign. The drive will focus on removing waste from bus shelters, Bescom transformer areas, vacant sites, temples, parks, underpasses, public toilets, and other areas. TNN

Amid push for more industrial parks, many existing KIADB plots lie idle

Of 2k Developed Plots, 1,908 Allotted Till Jan

Vindhya.Pabolu
@timesofindia.com

Bengaluru: The state govt has announced new industrial parks in its latest budget, but a significant number of existing KIADB (Karnataka Industrial Areas Development Board) estates lie underutilised, raising questions about whether expanding capacity makes sense before fixing existing infrastructure.

As per data from KIADB, as of Jan 13, 2026, of approximately 2,050 developed plots across 13 industrial areas in and around Bengaluru, only 1,908 were allotted.

The contrast between older and newer industrial zones is telling. Established areas like Kumbalagodu Phases 1 and 2 (set up in 1979 and 1982) and Doddaballapur (1983) have allotted all 347 plots, while a few others earmarked for aerospace, IT, and hardware sectors have seen 574 plots allotted.

But plot allotment is only the first step. On all allotted plots, a mere 543 units are currently in production; the rest are either under construction, awaiting implementation, or simply idle.

All 134 units across Kumbalagodu's two phases are operational, while all 114 units in Doddaballapur's general industrial area are running.

Out of 250 units, only 36 in production at IT Park

The IT Sector Park, spanning 1,175 acres and set up in 2009, tells a different story. Despite 250 developed units, only 36 are currently in production. The newest area in Devanahalli — launched in 2022 — has 115 allotted units but just one operational. The IT and aerospace sectors carry the highest burden of "allotted but not implemented" units: 79 and 73, respectively.

The aerospace parks, which register a high number of working industries, have received over 100 new land requests, including from international investors, officials said. However, KIADB chief executive officer M Mahesh remains upbeat. "Many industries are thriving. We're seeing strong interest in software, manufacturing, aerospace, defence, automobiles, solar, and semiconductors. We are among the top FDI (Foreign Direct Investment) destinations," he told **TOI**, adding that idle units would be addressed soon. In his budget speech, chief minister Siddaramaiah had said: "During the first half of 2025-26, FDI equity inflows to the state stood at $9.4 billion, accounting for 26.7% of the nation's total inflows."

STAKEHOLDERS A WORRIED LOT

TOI

Voices on the ground are less optimistic. An aircraft manufacturer operating out of Bommasandra for 15 years described the conditions as being "on the verge of collapse" — pothole-ridden roads, a decade of neglect and ineffective local associations that have forced several large firms, some employing 2,000 to 3,000 workers, to relocate to Tamil Nadu or Gujarat. The manufacturer himself has acquired land in Ahmedabad and is considering a move.

Industry bodies echo the concern. Uma Reddy, president of Federation of Karnataka Chambers of Commerce and Industry (FKCCI), acknowledged the state's strong industrial legacy — rooted in institutions like HAL and BEL — but stressed that growth now demands better connectivity, upgraded infrastructure and development of plots beyond Bengaluru.

The pattern is difficult to ignore: new parks keep getting announced while existing ones see units sitting idle and businesses quietly leaving. Until infrastructure gaps are addressed, fresh announcements risk being real estate exercises dressed up as industrial policy.

STATE OF PLOTS ACROSS 13 INDUSTRIES

- Plots developed: **2,036**
- Plots allotted: **1,908**
- Vacant plots: **128**
- Units across plots: **1,632**
- Possession certificate issued: **1,320**
- Building plan approved: **794**
- Under construction: **543**
- Units allotted but not implemented: **270**

Industrial areas: Kumbalagodu Phase 1, Kumbalagodu Phase 2, Doddaballapur General, Apparel Park Phase 1, Apparel Park Phase 2, Aerospace Sector, Aerospace Sector (SEZ), IT Sector, Hardware Sector, Obadenahalli (Doddaballapur 3rd Phase Industrial Area), Adhinarayana Hosahalli (Doddaballapur 4th Phase), Hi-tech Defence & Aerospace Park, Devanahalli General Industrial Area-1

— Source: KIADB

Man beaten to death with bat for refusing to pay hafta; 7 held

TOI

Times News Network

Rasheed Pasha, who was constucting a concrete roof over his garage in a property belonging to the Waqf Board, was attacked by a group

Bengaluru: A 45-year-old mechanic was allegedly beaten to death by a group wielding a cricket bat and wooden logs in front of his children near Bade Makhan in Wilson Garden Sunday night. The attack reportedly stemmed from a dispute over the construction of a concrete roof for his shop and alleged demands for hafta (protection money).

The deceased, Rasheed Pasha from Anepalya, had been running a four-wheeler garage for more than six years in a property belonging to the Waqf Board.

WAQF PROPERTY

Deputy commissioner of police (central) Hakay Akshay Machhindra said seven people have been arrested in connection with the case. The arrested include Pervez, Asgar, Munawar, Sameer, and three others.

Police said the gang, led by Asgar, had allegedly obtained documents related to the property through the Right to Information Act and had been demanding hafta from Rasheed. When he refused to pay, they reportedly lodged complaints with the Waqf Board, police and govt authorities last year. Rasheed subsequently approached Waqf Board and obtained permission to continue running the garage by paying rent.

On Sunday, Rasheed began constructing a concrete roof over the shop. Alerted by local person, Asgar sent some of his associates to verify the work and they confirmed that the roof construction was under way. The accused reportedly demanded that Rasheed stop the work immediately, claiming he had encroached upon Waqf Board property. Rasheed refused to halt the work or pay any hafta and questioned their authority to interfere.

Later that night, Pervez, Asgar and others allegedly arrived at the garage and confronted Rasheed. His children and brother were present at the spot when a heated argument broke out. During the altercation, Rasheed reportedly picked up a cricket bat and struck one of the accused. In retaliation, police said Pervez snatched the bat and repeatedly assaulted Rasheed, striking him hard on the head. Rasheed sustained severe head injuries and collapsed on the ground, bleeding profusely. The accused fled the scene immediately after the attack.

Rasheed was rushed to a hospital but succumbed to his injuries within minutes. Soon after the incident, hundreds of people gathered at the spot, creating tension in the area. Police deployed additional personnel to maintain law and order. Rasheed's brother told police that the group had been harassing Rasheed for more than a year.

Music enthusiasts mourn as Hard Rock Café tunes out after franchise ends

Nithya.Mandyam
@timesofindia.com

Bengaluru: Huge halls of Hard Rock Café — which offered live music and much more — across India have fallen silent. Bengaluru's music lovers are mourning the loss of a space that defined the city's nightlife and rock culture.

The sudden end came after Hard Rock International terminated agreements with JSM Corporation and its affiliated entities, revoking their rights to operate Hard Rock Cafe outlets and Rock Shops across India.

Hard Rock operated 10 cafes in the country — including three in Bengaluru and in Hyderabad, New Delhi, Pune and Chennai. "The Hard Rock Hotel in Goa will remain open and is not connected to this operator," the company said in a statement Monday. Founded in 2004, JSM introduced global brands Hard Rock Cafe and California Pizza Kitchen to India, besides launching the upscale dining concept, Shiro.

New partner on board?

Is it a goodbye forever? Nah. Sources told **TOI** that a new partner has been identified and the restaurants are likely to resume operations.

Yet, memories started flooding in: It was at Hard Rock Cafe that thousands of Bengalureans had their several firsts: Proposal, underage drink and introduction to rock music.

A landmark near Anil Kumble Circle for two decades, the place was the favourite for rock music lovers. The 9,000sqft venue retained its colonial charm, while its interiors were adorned with music memorabilia. The space was divided into two main halls and an open courtyard that frequently hosted live performances.

"This was the first truly 'cool' place I visited during my college days," said Tejaswini Anjankumar, a fashion designer. "For our generation, it was a big part of our social life. I didn't know much about rock music then; it was more about the aesthetic vibe and being at that one hot place everyone wanted to hang out."

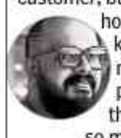
The café offered handcrafted drinks and a menu that included classic American favourites, alongside local dishes. It also features an on-site Rock Shop where visitors could purchase branded merchandise and collectibles associated with the Hard Rock brand.

Along with Hard Rock Café, other hangouts — Purple Haze, Jimmy's, Styx, Pecos and Downtown Pub — helped shape Bengaluru's reputation as India's rock capital.

When **TOI** reached out to JSM cofounder Sanjay Mahtani, he said, "You'll hear from us soon."

TOI

"The news brought back a flood of memories. I was first introduced to rock music at Hard Rock Cafe — not just as a customer, but also by hosting karaoke nights and performing there. I met so many people who later became close friends. The entire culture and vibe of the place is something I will deeply miss



Abhishek Nagarkar | SINGER

"Hard Rock Cafe brings back so many memories. I bunked college in Manipal just to come to Bengaluru for a concert and watch my favourite musician, Prem Joshua, perform. The rock scene has been declining for years, but those gigs — Pink Floyd tributes, Judas Priest covers, local and international bands — were incredible. The name of the care itself is iconic, which makes this even more heartbreaking

Vinay BV | MUSIC ENTHUSIAST

"Rock music and pop culture were deeply connected to old Bengaluru, and this place was one of the icons of that era. I grew up with it and have so many memories there — my first dates, celebrating when my first film was signed, and even my wife's birthday. It had a close-knit community, almost like a cult following, where everyone knew each other and came for the music

Pannaga Bharana | FILM DIRECTOR AND PRODUCER

Man records video of riding bike with two women, pays ₹2k fine

Times News Network

Bengaluru: Recording a video of himself triple-riding on a motorbike with two women and uploading it online cost a Doddaballapur-based man Rs 2,000 in traffic fine.

Daily-wage worker Manjunath G had a passion for uploading reels of himself on social media, which earned him the nickname, Reels Manja, police said.

Manjunath paid Rs 500 for riding without a helmet, Rs 500 each for pillion riders not wearing helmets and the rest for other violations.

Trouble began when Manjunath recorded a video while riding his bike with the two women on Madagondanahalli Main Road. None of them wore helmets and Manjunath was heard shouting, "Huli-huli" (Tiger-tiger in Kannada).

Doddaballapur Rural police saw the video and booked a case against him under BNS Section 281 (rash and negligent driving) and other traffic violations.

Youth hits divider, dies

A late-night bike ride turned tragic when a 24-year-old youth died after crashing into a road divider near Iskcon temple late Sunday night.

Chethan R, the victim, had gone to meet friends and was returning home when the accident occurred around 11.30pm on West of Chord Road. Police said Chethan lost control of the bike, rammed into the central median, veered to the left side of the road and hit a tree.

RTO: Candidates must take learner licence online test sans help

Bengaluru: The transport department warned that applications of candidates, who take assistance from others while appearing for Learner's Licence (LLR) online test, will be rejected. The department said applicants must take the test on their own without external help.

J P Krishnananda, regional transport officer of Bengaluru east (Kasturinagar), said, "Most of the services provided by RTOs are available online, including applying for LLR. On Parivahan portal, there are 2 sections — Sarathi and Vahan. Sarathi is related to driving licence services, while Vahan deals with vehicle-related services such as registration and other documentation," he said.

He said after submitting LLR application, candidates can take the test online at a time convenient to them. However, no one should interfere, assist the candidate or stand next to them during the test as these are treated as violations and may lead to rejection of the application.

ALMANAC (17.3.2026)

Meena Masa 3 – Shri Vishvavasu Nama Samvatsara – Uttarayana – Shishira Ritu – Tithi: Phalguna Krishna Trayodasi h. 9-23 Nakshatra: Dhanistha h. 6-22 Yoga: Siddha h. 8-15. 27 Ramadan
Kali Day 1872651
Sab-e-Qadr (Preceding night) (Moslem)
Rahu Kalam: 3 – 4.30pm

— KL Vidya Shankara Somayaji

To improve scores, govt to sync degree syllabus with SSC exams

TIMES NEWS NETWORK

Bengaluru: The govt intends to set up a committee to examine the possibility of linking the syllabus of degree colleges with Staff Selection Commission (SSC) examinations to help students perform better in competitive exams.

Higher education minister MC Sudhakar told the council Monday the move was mooted after the govt found the number of students from Karnataka clearing SSC examinations was not at the desired level. Based on the recommendations of the committee, the govt will make a final decision, he said.

To a question from Congress' Ramesh Babu, Sudhakar said the govt plans to bring all universities, including private and deemed institutions, under Unified University and College Management System 2.0.

He said Karnataka has more than 30 universities, and their academic calendars differed, with some institutions beginning classes earlier than others. To address this, the govt has prepared a common calendar of events for the next five years.

PICS: TOI

TOGETHER AGAIN: CM Siddaramaiah and his deputy DK Shivakumar at the Mahila Congress' executive committee meeting and training workshop in Bengaluru on Monday

He also lambasted the functioning of universities, pointing out poor administration, corruption allegations, staff shortages and declining quality of education. "I have to stand here and justify their maladministration," he said. He cited an instance where a university spent Rs 11 crore on printing marks cards despite orders to issue digital records.

Policy on childcare leave

Primary and secondary education minister Madhu Bangarappa, meanwhile, said the govt will introduce a policy making it mandatory to sanction childcare leave (CCL) for women teachers at least 15 days in advance. To a question from BJP's YM Satish on the "confusion surrounding maternity and CCL", Bangarappa said the issue needs to be addressed on humanitarian grounds. He said the govt will frame policy and assured the House guest teachers will be appointed to ensure academic activities are unaffected.

Bangarappa also said annual teacher transfers will be completed through counselling — before schools reopen for the new academic year. He told the House women teachers can opt to work from a location close to their residence for five years after childbirth but such postings will also be decided through counselling.

PE teachers' shortage

Bangarappa told the council that 5,202 physical education (PE) teacher posts are currently vacant, and the govt will fill them on priority in the next round of recruitment. Chidanandagowda of BJP said PE teachers had not been recruited for several years, while council chairman Basavaraj Horatti also questioned why moral education was being taught during physical education periods. Responding to this, Bangarappa clarified it was not the case. "Directions were issued to allocate a separate period for moral education," he said.

NEET training

Medical education minister Dr Sharanprakash Patil told the council Karnataka has not lost a single medical seat due to NEET. Replying to a question from Congress' Ivan D'Souza, Patil said the govt provides 15% horizontal reservation for rural students across categories. "We will soon introduce a scheme to train students from rural areas for NEET," he said.

Assembly passes bill to regulate hoardings

TIMES NEWS NETWORK

Bengaluru: A bill to regulate outdoor advertisements and empower municipal bodies to levy and collect fees on hoardings and billboards was passed in the legislative assembly.

The Lower House Monday adopted the Karnataka Municipalities and Certain Other Laws (Amendment) Bill, 2026, after it was moved by Byrathi Suresh, minister for urban development and town planning.

The bill says any person who erects, exhibits, or displays advertisements or hoardings on land, buildings, walls, or other structures within municipal limits will be liable to pay a fee fixed by the local body. The fee, prescribed through a resolution, should be within rates set by the govt.

Advertisers must obtain prior written permission from the municipal council or the corporation commissioner and permission will not be granted if the advertisement violates municipal bylaws or if the fee is not paid. Civic authorities are also empowered to remove or demolish unauthorised advertisements.

Officials may issue notices directing the owner or occupier to remove such displays, failing which they can enter the premises and clear them. Unauthorised advertisements will attract penalties and fines.

Delayed payments will attract interest at 18% per annum until the dues are cleared. Authorities may recover dues in a manner similar to property tax recovery, including the seizure and sale of advertisement materials.

FULL POWERS: Authorities can enter premises and clear advertisements if found illegal

Replying to questions, Suresh said the move aims to curb illegal hoardings and ensure that revenue flows to local bodies. "Some who have installed illegal advertisements are not paying even one rupee in tax. We will bring advertisements under a tender process so that the govt earns revenue," he said.

The minister said all advertisements on govt or private property will attract fees. "If someone has placed a private advertisement on govt land, the govt or corporation will fix the fee. Whoever wins the tender must pay the amount," he said, adding, "There is revenue worth hundreds of crores from this, and our intention is that it should flow to local bodies."

SHORT TAKES

No proposal to hike fixed tariff for domestic power users: Min

The govt clarified in the legislative council that there is no proposal to hike fixed tariff for domestic power consumers. Replying to a question from CN Manjegowda of JD(S), minor irrigation minister and floor leader NS Boseraju, speaking on behalf of energy minister KJ George, said a proposal to hike power tariff must be submitted 120 days prior to the financial year. He said a proposal was submitted on Nov 29, 2025, but it did not mention hiking fixed charges for household consumption. Boseraju also revealed the six escoms in the state incurred a total revenue deficit of ₹4,516 crore in 2024-25. Bescom was the highest at ₹2,802 crore, "The Karnataka Electricity Regulatory Commission will suggest ways to overcome the loss," said Boseraju.

In Rajya Sabha, Sudha Murty demands AIIMS in Raichur

Nominated Rajya Sabha member Sudha Murty Monday urged the Centre to establish an All India Institute of Medical Sciences in Raichur district, citing decades of underdevelopment and poor healthcare infrastructure in North Karnataka. Raising the issue during zero hour, Murty said Karnataka is yet to get an AIIMS though several states have one. She said Raichur is among the most backward districts identified by NITI Aayog and that North Karnataka has remained neglected for over 260 years compared with southern Karnataka. She said inadequate hospital infrastructure forces patients to travel to Hyderabad or Bengaluru for treatment, increasing healthcare costs.

Shortage acute, govt buying land for graves: Byre Gowda

Revenue minister Krishna Byre Gowda revealed the govt is facing an acute shortage of land even for burial grounds and has had to purchase land worth Rs 58 crore in the past three years for this purpose. Replying to BJP's Prabhu Chavan in the assembly, Byre Gowda said efforts over the past decade to ensure burial grounds in every village have not fully succeeded despite high court directions. He said minority communities are unhappy over the lack of cemetery space, while in some areas around Bengaluru, Hindus who traditionally buried the dead have shifted to cremation due to lack of land.

SIR a political conspiracy and bloodless genocide: Activists

At a consultative meeting of secular parties and social organisations on SIR in Bengaluru, activists like Parakala Prabhakar, Devasagayam, Thomas Franco and others claimed SIR is a "dangerous political conspiracy". They said people refuse to accept SIR in its current, hurried version and demanded a transparent, patient and people-friendly approach. They also demanded mandatory social auditing and Aadhaar not be stricken off as evidence. CM Siddaramaiah's political secretary Nasir Ahmed and Shivajinagar MLA Rizwan Arshad participated in the meeting.

In 3 months, all ambulances to come under 112 helpline

The govt will introduce a centralised ambulance management system under the unified emergency helpline number 112, medical education minister Sharanprakash Patil said. Responding to a question, Patil said the system is expected to be fully operational in three months, with technical integration under way. Patil said the govt will directly manage all state ambulances — including 715 under the Arogya Kavacha scheme — through the 112 platform to improve coordination and ensure faster emergency response. He said as per Union govt norms, there is no shortage of ambulances.

BJP seeks case against Mushtaq

TIMES NEWS NETWORK

Bengaluru: Opposition leader in the council Chalavadi Narayanaswamy Monday demanded the govt register a suo motu case against International Booker Prize winner **Banu Mushtaq** and arrest her for allegedly insulting Dr BR Ambedkar by offering floral tributes while wearing slippers.

During an event in Mandya Sunday, Mushtaq reportedly said "chappali (slippers) are my house deity" while explaining why she did not remove them before offering flowers. The reference was to some in her family being cobblers.

At a press conference in Bengaluru, Narayanaswamy said: "I strongly condemn her arrogance in insulting both Hindus and Muslims."

He recalled that when Mushtaq was invited earlier to inaugurate Dasara celebrations, several people had opposed the decision, alleging that she was anti-Kannada. However, many Dalit organisations and activists had then supported her. He questioned their silence now.

"Those who stitch slippers are not from the Muslim community but from Scheduled Castes. Members of my community traditionally stitch slippers," Narayanaswamy said. He also asked: "Will Mushtaq accept shoes or slippers worn by Ambedkar as her household deity?"

Min: Most encroachments on waqf land by Muslims

TIMES NEWS NETWORK

Bengaluru: Waqf minister BZ Zameer Ahmed Khan Monday said most encroachments on waqf properties in the state are by Muslims and insisted the Waqf Board will not interfere with properties attached to temples, schools or educational institutions.

Replying to a question from MY Patil in the assembly, Zameer said the govt plans only to remove encroachments by private parties. "Waqf properties are spread over a total 1,12,860 acres," he said. "These were not given by the govt but were donated by private individuals for the welfare of the community. Of this, 17,969 acres have been encroached upon. The encroachments were not by temple managements; most are by the Muslim community."

Zameer went on to say only 24,054 acres of waqf land remains with the board. He said 17,580 acres have been encroached upon, 47,263 acres went under Inam abolition, and 23,627 acres came under the Land Reforms Act.

DEFENDING HIS STANCE: Zameer Ahmed Khan in the legislative assembly on Monday

He said the govt constituted waqf Lok Adalats in 2023 to identify and recover encroached properties. The move triggered controversy after BJP alleged the Waqf Board had issued notices to farmers claiming thousands of acres of farmland was waqf property.

Raising the issue, Patil said many properties in and around Afzalpur in Kalaburagi district are registered as waqf but are in private possession. "We cannot launch govt projects on this land and have to look for private land," Patil said. "But private parties currently possess these properties. They are not under the control of either the Waqf Board or govt."

Leave farmers alone: Ashoka

Opposition leader R Ashoka said BJP's objection was not about Muslims encroaching waqf land but the board claiming public and temple properties as waqf.

"Earlier, temple and waqf land was donated to farmers and they have been tilling the land for generations. If farmers are in possession of the land, it should be left to them irrespective of whether they are Hindu or Muslim," Ashoka said.

Ashoka also called for a probe into waqf property allegedly encroached in Bengaluru: "Let there also be an investigation into the famous Windsor Manor hotel. Mr Zameer, you did not mention this case and instead talked of other issues. You never ever mention it, perhaps because you go there to eat," he said.

Zameer said the dispute relating to the hotel property is currently before the Supreme Court.

195 graft cases in 41 months: BJP cites Lokayukta report

TIMES NEWS NETWORK

Bengaluru: Opposition leader **R Ashoka** claimed corruption is widespread under the Congress govt, bolstering his claim by quoting a Lokayukta report which said 195 cases were registered against senior officials over the past 41 months.

Ashoka said the cases involving IAS, IPS and KAS officials show the scale of alleged irregularities and are a "reflection of the functioning of the govt". Quoting from the report, he said Karnataka Lokayukta registered the cases between Sep 2022 and Feb 2026. "Of these, 104 cases relate to raids linked to disproportionate assets, while in 91 cases, officials were caught red-handed while accepting bribes," he said.

He said investigations in 89 cases are still at a preliminary stage. An IAS and IPS officer are among those facing corruption charges, while 12 KAS officials also face charges. The report clarifies that no official has been convicted or cleared of charges.

Ashoka also criticised the govt for failing to ensure timely payments to sugarcane growers. He said sugar factories are required to clear dues within 15 days of procurement, but in Belagavi district, some Rs 1,554 crore remains unpaid even after the 2025-26 sugar season ended.

"Siddaramaiah, if you spend your time only securing your chair, who will respond to hardships of farmers?" he asked.

He also alleged the Ayushman Bharat scheme has not been implemented effectively in the state. "The Union govt expanded Ayushman Bharat-Pradhan Mantri Jan Arogya Yojana in 2024, extending the scheme to cover all citizens above the age of 70," he said. "But senior citizens are unable to access medical treatment even though they possess the Ayushman Vayo Vandana card which offers coverage upto Rs 5 lakh."

NEW STRIPED ATTRACTION AT BANNERUGHATTA PARK

TOI

IN STEP WITH MOM: A playful zebra foal moves close to its mother at Bannerughatta Biological Park. The zoo welcomed two female foals in Jan this year. Their arrival took the zebra population at the park to 10. The young ones are now moving around with the herd under the watchful eyes of veterinarians and animal keepers

Min: Officials who failed to submit replies to face music

▶Continued from page 1

When home minister G Parameshwara tabled written replies to 84 of the 230 unstarred questions submitted by MLAs, Khader pointed out that nearly 65% of questions went unanswered. On Friday, the speaker pulled up the govt over a similar lapse, saying his 'gentleness' should not be mistaken for 'weakness'.

The speaker pulled up the govt over the lapse, saying his 'gentleness' should not be mistaken for 'weakness'

HOUSE ADJOURNED

He said the govt tabled answers for just 50 of the 133 unstarred questions. Opposition members said this is the fifth instance during the current session by the govt despite the Speaker's reminders on timely replies.

Starred questions are those picked by a draw of lots to be discussed in the house. The rest are called unstarred questions, which receive written replies.

While the CM intervened to find a solution, Parameshwara admitted that such an adjournment is rare.

The minister said the CM had asked the chief secretary to issue notices to officials who had failed to submit replies on time and suspend those who repeatedly delay responses to legislators' questions. BJP's R Ashoka alleged that several IAS officers had not attended offices for 8-9 months.

Students run & raise ₹65L to support girls' edu

TIMES NEWS NETWORK

Bengaluru: Turning classroom lessons into real-world impact, students from three management institutions in the city raised around Rs 65 lakh through Kanyathon, a student-driven run held recently to support the education of nearly 1,000 govt school students.

Kanyathon is a social impact initiative driven by students of Jagdish Sheth School of Management, IFIM College, IFIM College of Law and Vijaybhoomi University. The event, which saw participation of nearly 10,000 running enthusiasts, was organised in Electronics City with funds sourced by students from corporates such as Wipro, HP, Biocon, Deutsche Bank, Infosys and Siemens.

In fact, in the last six years, Kanyathon has raised about Rs 3.1 crore. Through the programme, nine Kanyathon Shiksha Kendras were established to supplement the learning of 1,000 govt school-going girls with a solid foundation in English, digital literacy, health and hygiene. It also helped educate them on menstrual health and provided access to feminine hygiene products.

TOI

ALL FOR A CAUSE: Kanyathon was organised in Electronics City recently, with funds sourced by students themselves from corporates

In fact, for these students, this fundraising event was an application of all their management lessons on campus. "It is fully integrated into the university curriculum. Students earn academic credits and develop practical skills as they manage the event, applying classroom theories in areas such as organisational leadership, project management, human resources and finance. Structured like a corporate entity, Kanyathon has designated roles — president, vice-president, marketing head, operations manager and finance head — that mirror real-world business settings," said Kalpana Padode, governing board member, Vijaybhoomi University, and the brain behind Kanyathon.

Naomi Bhowmick, a PG diploma student in management from JAGSoM, agreed: "One of the most prominent lessons is people management. We meet a wide range of people — common participants to senior corporates — everyone comes with different sets of expectations and temperaments."

"We strongly believe in the cause. We pitch to the corporates and try to convince them with the impact and the scale at which it is happening. We engage them with stories of how it changed lives. Once they are convinced, we change the conversation to how they want to invest," she added. Ruchika Goel, another student, said: "We once went to Church Street for a sales drive. Some students stood on the pavement, frozen. People got curious, came up to us and asked about the event. So it was a class for us to get showcase our creativity too."

Planning starts from Nov, and around 2,000 students are involved. By Jan, students are out of classrooms, working in full swing on the project.

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OBITUARY

DEATH ANNIVERSARY

3rd Death Anniversary
In loving memory of

Radha K Kumar
04.11.1969 - 17.03.2023
To our Guardian Angel in heaven, thank you for the love you gave us then, and the blessings you send us now
Fondly remembered by Family & Friends

In Loving Memory of

Dr. S. CHINNASWAMY
(05.08.1948 to 17-03-2018)
B.E., M.E., E.I.E. (IND), C.E., M.IR.C., M.IC.I., M.I.B.C., M.A.S.C.E., M.M.S.P.I., M.A.C.C.E.
Founder & C.E.O Gooly Consultancy Services,
Former Additional Director General,
CPWD, Govt. of India
Deeply mourned by
Smt. Sudha Chinnaswamy, Family Members and Friends

26th Death Anniversary

Late H.S. Shiva Swamy
25.12.1931 - 17.03.2000
From Family Members

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HC asserts marital harmony cannot erase illegality of child marriage

TIMES NEWS NETWORK

Bengaluru: The plea of parents who claimed they married off their minor daughter during the Covid-19 pandemic out of fear that the virus could claim lives did not find favour with the Karnataka high court, which refused to quash criminal proceedings in the child marriage case.

Dismissing the petition, Justice M Nagaprasanna made it clear that fear or subsequent harmony in the marriage cannot erase the illegality of marrying off a minor.

"The law protects childhood, so that it may blossom into informed adulthood. This court will not permit this protection to be diminished," the judge said.

The case related to a marriage solemnised at Devanahalli on Aug 30, 2021, when the groom was 27 years old and the girl was 16. A suo motu complaint was filed by the local child protection officer under the provisions of Prohibition of Child Marriage Act, 2006, following which police filed a chargesheet against the groom, his and the girls' parents.

Seeking to quash the proceedings, the accused argued that the girl is now over 20 years old and the marriage was registered after she turned 18. They also contended that the wedding took place at the height of Covid-19 pandemic and that they rushed the marriage, fearing the disease could take away lives. The parents further submitted that they were unaware of the legal consequences when the ceremony was conducted.

However, the court was not persuaded. Justice Nagaprasanna noted that sections 9, 10 and 11 of the Act – which penalise child marriage and its promotion – serve as a strong legal shield against child marriages.

"They are not merely penal provisions; they are legislative declarations that childhood shall not be prematurely surrendered at the altar of matrimony," the judge said.

"The Supreme Court poignantly observed that child marriage is not a benign cultural practice, but a denial of basic human rights. It curtails education, imperils health, and exposes a child to exploitation—emotional, social, and economic. The formative years for learning, self-discovery, and intellectual blossoming are permanently burdened with adult responsibilities," the order noted.

Justice Nagaprasanna observed: "A girl married before 18 does not merely enter matrimony; she exits opportunity. The promise of education fades into abstraction. The dream of academic or professional advancement remains precisely that, a dream. The submission that the couple is presently living in harmony does not efface the illegality committed at the time of solemnisation."

The judge added that parents who should empower their daughters often end up pushing them into premature marriage.

Issuing further directions, the court said authorities must spread awareness about the law.

"Child development project officers shall ensure that awareness of criminal liability is displayed at every venue where marriages are ordinarily performed. Temple authorities, marriage halls, and similar establishments shall display notices stating that the marriage of a person below the age of 18 years is prohibited by law and attracts criminal consequences."

'NO RETROSPECTIVE VALIDATION'

WHAT JUDGE SAID

"Criminal liability is measured at the moment of commission, not neutralised by subsequent domestic peace. To accept otherwise would be to convert penal law into a matter of retrospective validation through sentiment

Parents who ought to bless their daughters with encouragement, education, and empowerment instead bless them with premature matrimony. If such conduct were to receive judicial indulgence, the eradication of child marriage would remain an elusive aspiration

Where a marriage is solemnised in a temple, the management of a temple and the officiating priest who performs the ceremony may fall within the sweep of liability under the Act. Where the marriage is conducted in a marriage hall or other venue, its management and facilitators cannot claim insulation

Court seeks compliance report on standing order

TIMES NEWS NETWORK

Bengaluru: The high court directed the state govt to submit a detailed compliance report regarding the implementation of Standing Order No. 1054, which establishes the mechanism for handling missing persons cases.

In its report, the govt must clarify whether the district missing persons units have been constituted in all districts. It should also provide details on the composition of the review and supervisory committees formed to monitor such cases, along with the frequency of review meetings conducted by these committees. Further, the report must specify the total number of cases currently under investigation, including how many are classified as active, dormant, or traced. It should also outline the mechanism adopted for coordination with police authorities of other states in instances where a missing person is suspected to have moved outside the state.

The report is to be submitted next month, as directed by Justice Suraj Govindaraj.

In the case on hand, petitioner Mahesh, a resident of Bengaluru, approached the court after police put the FIR registered by them on June 26, 2020, in relation to his missing cousin Kumar, on the dormant list in May 2024.

During the proceedings, police submitted a report regarding missing persons from 2020 till Nov 30, 2025.

MISSING PERSONS

A perusal of the report showed that missing person complaints were filed for 38,073 men, of whom 31,603 were traced, leaving 6,470 untraced. In the case of women and children, the numbers were higher. A total of 71,699 women and children were reported missing, of whom 68,718 were traced, leaving 2,981 untraced.

The state govt also placed on record Standing Order No. 1054 dated Jan 21, 2026, issued by the director general and inspector general of police (DG & IGP).

Justice Suraj Govindaraj noted that a large number of complaints relating to missing persons cannot be lost sight of, including minor children and young girls, reported across the state, and in many cases families are left without any meaningful information regarding the whereabouts of their loved ones for a long period of time.

In such circumstances, it becomes the responsibility of the state to ensure that the institutional mechanisms contemplated under the standing orders are not merely existing on paper but are effectively operationalised in practice, the judge added.

Since the FIR registered regarding the petitioner's cousin was made an "active case" and the investigation is being continued, the judge disposed of the petition.

Court case on, wait for 1-km link road to NICE gets longer

Suchith.Kidiyoor
@timesofindia.com

Syed Asif

The road is expected to help motorists avoid traffic congestion while accessing Bengaluru-Mysuru access-controlled highway

Bengaluru: The opening of a newly built 1-km link road connecting Deepanjali Nagar junction with NICE Road at Clover Leaf near Outer Ring Road remains uncertain, with the public works department (PWD) unlikely to grant permission amid an ongoing legal dispute with the project operator.

The PWD took Nandi Infrastructure Corridor Enterprises (NICE) Ltd to court, alleging violations of the framework agreement governing the NICE Road project. According to the department, the agreement required the operator to construct a concrete road capable of withstanding heavy traffic movement but the operator deviated from the agreed terms.

Sources said the NICE operator approached PWD about a month ago, seeking approval to open the road. Principal secretary (public works department) Amlan Aditya Biswas said: "They have not met the technical requirements of building the road as per the framework agreement on construction of the road. The issues related to quality of the road and other aspects are sub-judice. We want the court to give us directions on how to proceed."

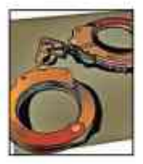
An official from NICE said the link road is already completed and permission to open it was sought from PWD. "Once opened, the road will help motorists avoid traffic congestion while accessing the Bengaluru-Mysuru access-controlled highway, especially near Nayandahalli stretch.

It will also benefit commuters travelling towards Electronics City via NICE Road," the official said. Toll is likely to be collected on the stretch, similar to other link roads on the corridor.

Eeactions were mixed after MD of NICE Ashok Kheny shared an aerial photograph of the completed link road on social media. While some users asked when the road would be opened, others criticised toll charges.

Guard kills wife, arrested

Bengaluru: A quarrel turned fatal when a security guard allegedly murdered his wife by slitting her throat at their rented house in Bilekahalli, south Bengaluru, Sunday night.



The victim, Rangamma, 45, was a housekeeping staffer. Her husband Nagaraju, 50, was an alcoholic, police said.

Around 8.30pm Sunday, neighbours heard them arguing and then the noise suddenly stopped. When they knocked on the couple's door, they found Rangamma lying on the floor in a pool of blood with her throat slit and Nagaraju missing.

Mico Layout cops tracked down and arrested Nagaraju Monday. TNN

Doon University Dehradun
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P.O. Defence Colony Dehradun, 248012.
Ph.No: 0135-2533136

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Recruitment Notification- 991, 992, 993 and 994 Dated 12 March 2026

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Registrar

Sahitya Akademi Award for Kannada, Konkani writers

TIMES NEWS NETWORK

RECOGNITION: Amaresh Nugadoni (L) and HM Pernal

Noted Kannada writer Amaresh Nugadoni and Konkani writer and journalist HM Pernal from Mangaluru have been honoured with the prestigious Sahitya Akademi Award for 2025. Nugadoni received the award for his Kannada short story collection Dada Serisu Tande, while Pernal was recognised for his literary work Konkani Kavyem: Rupam Ani Rupakam.

The award, presented annually and which carries a cash prize of Rs 1 lakh, a plaque and a shawl, is among the country's most respected literary honours and recognises outstanding works in 24 Indian languages.

Nugadoni, 66, a retired Kannada University professor, is known for his distinctive narrative style and grounded storytelling.

Over the years, he emerged as an important voice in Kannada literature, with four of his stories previously adapted into films.

The award-winning work comprises eight stories, reflecting everyday struggles, relationships and moral dilemmas in the lives of ordinary people from rural Kalyana Karnataka. Written in his simple yet evocative style, Nugadoni captures the complexities of life amid ongoing social changes. The collection was first published in January 2020 in Raichur.

Writers and literary critics welcomed the recognition, describing it as a proud moment for Kannada literature and the state's vibrant storytelling tradition.

Pernal is the fourth Konkani writer from Karnataka to receive the honour. His book also holds the distinction of being the first Konkani work in literary criticism to win the Sahitya Akademi Award. The book carries a foreword by Jnanpith award-winning Konkani writer Damodar Mauzo.

Pernal has published more than 15 original literary works, including four poetry collections.

PU students get wrong Q-paper

Hassan: Some II PU girl students who appeared for computer science examination Monday were in for a shock after they learnt that they answered the wrong question paper.

Six students writing the exam at Belur Girls' PU College in Hassan district received question papers prepared for repeaters as per the old syllabus. And students who go that question paper are freshers.

A student alleged that they came to know about the wrong question paper only after returning from the exam centre.

Department authorities said they rectified the mistake soon and gave extra time to the students. TNN

Tie-up on infectious disease research

Bengaluru: Jawaharlal Nehru Centre for Advanced Scientific Research, has partnered with YR Gaitonde Medical, Educational and Research Foundation through its operational arm YRGCARE to translate basic research on infectious diseases into clinical solutions and narrow the long-standing "bench-to-bed" gap. TNN

Man ordered to clear debris blocking neighbour's access

Vindhya.Pabolu
@timesofindia.com

A property owner with a genuine apprehension of interference is entitled to legal protection
JMFC, KR PURA

Bengaluru: After nearly two years of frustration over blocked access to his property, 62-year-old Sridharan S of Koramangala's 8th Block has finally found relief in court. The civil judge and judicial magistrate first class (JMFC) in KR Pura recently ruled in his favour, directing his neighbour to remove construction debris that had been obstructing access to Sridharan's land.

Sridharan and his brother, S Bhaskar, had purchased the property in Varthur village in 1987 through a registered sale deed. In Aug 2022, Bhaskar executed a registered deed of release, transferring full ownership rights to Sridharan, who has since been paying property taxes in his name.

According to the suit filed on Oct 11, 2023, Sridharan alleged that his neighbour, Ramesh Reddy, 61, of Varthur, began dumping construction debris near the property, blocking access and interfering with his possession.

Sridharan alleged that Reddy, who owns the adjoining plot, acquired through a partition deed dated Dec 6, 2022, raised his land level by dumping construction debris, elevating it by nearly 10ft. Sridharan claimed that this caused rainwater to flow onto his property, obstructing natural drainage and flooding his land. He also argued that the debris blocked a private mud road used for ingress and egress, hindering access to his property. According to the plaintiff, some of the debris even encroached on his land.

While Sridharan alleged deliberate obstruction and flooding caused by the neighbouring property, the defence presented by Reddy's counsel — though no written statement was filed — was that he had acted within his rights as the owner of the adjoining plot. The defendant argued that raising the elevation of his land was part of routine development and landscaping, and that any water flowing onto the plaintiff's property was the result of natural seepage and the area's topography, not deliberate obstruction.

However, Reddy did not file any evidence or cross-examine Sridharan. He also failed to produce documentary proof to support his claim of lawful development. The court noted that the absence of evidence from the defendant left Sridharan's version of events — supported by sale deeds, the deed of release, partition documents, RTCs, and photographic evidence — unchallenged and credible.

Civil judge Vishwanath Savadi observed that Sridharan had established lawful ownership and peaceful possession of the property. The court found that Reddy's act of dumping construction debris interfered with Sridharan's access to his land, resulting in obstruction, nuisance, and flooding. It also noted that a property owner with a genuine apprehension of interference is entitled to legal protection.

The judge ordered that Sridharan be granted both a permanent and a mandatory injunction.

India not in discussion with US on policing Hormuz: MEA

No Talks With Iran On Safe Passage: EAM

▶Continued from page 1

External affairs minister S Jaishankar discussed developments related to the West Asia and Ukraine conflicts with European Commission President, Ursula von der Leyen, in a meeting on Monday.

The remarks by Jaishankar — seeking reason and coordination with Iran — came a day after US President Donald Trump said the US was engaged with seven countries for deployment of warships to secure the vital shipping route. The President has also warned Nato of a "very bad future" if allies don't help the US in its efforts. However, countries like Germany and the UK have expressed little

The remarks by Jaishankar — seeking reason and coordination with Iran — came a day after President Donald Trump said the US was engaged with 7 nations for deployment of warships to secure the vital shipping route

interest in getting dragged into a wider conflict.

The Centre also denied that India was among the countries in talks with the US on this issue. "We are aware of this matter being discussed by several countries. We have not yet discussed it bilaterally," said MEA spokesperson Randhir Jaiswal.

According to Jaishankar, from India's perspective, it's better to reason and coordinate with Iran to reach a solution. "So, if that sort of allows other people to engage, I think the world is better off for it," added Jaishankar.

PM Narendra Modi had spoken to Iranian President Masoud Pezeshkian on March 12 and stressed the safety and security of Indian nationals, along with the need for unhindered transit of goods and energy. However, India has not yet condemned the US-Israel attacks on Iran, and its efforts as Brics chair to forge a consensus for a joint statement on the conflict have not borne fruit yet.

Jaishankar also denied there was any exchange with Iran on the Hormuz safe passage issue and said he had engaged with Iran based on the two countries' relationship and a "history of dealing with each other".

Official sources described as baseless reports that Iran had sought release of its three US-sanctioned ships, which India had seized earlier, in return for safe passage through Hormuz. Jaishankar, however, said these were still early days, and India still had many ships that were waiting to cross the Strait that is under Iran's control.

"So, while this is a welcome development, there is continuing conversation because there is continued work on that," he said.

The minister spoke about the still escalating conflict in the West Asia region in meetings Monday with his counterparts from the EU, Germany, Greece and Cyprus.

Kerala youth stranded on Iran cargo ship, kin seek help

Kollam: A maritime trainee from Chandanathope in Kerala's Kollam is stranded on an Iranian cargo vessel mid-sea off Sharjah coast for nearly a month. His family is worried that he is suffering.

Akhimon M, 21, had joined Iran-based cargo vessel Queen Star and travelled to the country on April 14 last year. After completing training at International Maritime Academy in Chennai, he secured placement through a Jaipur-based recruitment agency.

His mother Rameeha Madhu told **TOI** that the family last spoke to him four days ago. "They have not been providing proper food or salary to my son. He said he is struggling. He is our only son and we're helpless," she said.

The family has approached the shipowner and sought intervention of Kollam MP, N K Premachandran. The MP told **TOI**: "I have taken up the matter with the Indian embassy in Iran... it is difficult to say when he would be able to return but he is reported to be safe." —**Rahul R**

As India seeks Strait passage, Iran says return seized tankers: Report

New Delhi: Iran has asked India to release three tankers seized in Feb as part of talks seeking the safe passage of Indian-flagged or India-bound vessels out of the Gulf via the Strait of Hormuz, sources with knowledge of the matter told Reuters.

Indian authorities seized the three Iran-linked tankers near Indian waters alleging they had concealed or altered their identities and were involved in illegal ship-to-ship transfers at sea.

Tehran has also sought supplies of certain medicines and medical equipment, according to one of the sources, an Iranian official.

Iran's ambassador to New Delhi met foreign ministry officials on Monday to discuss the issue, the source said. They declined to be named due to the sensitivity of the matter.

Foreign ministry, the Iranian embassy in New Delhi, and Iran's foreign ministry did not immediately respond to Reuters' requests for comment.

Iran recently allowed two Indian LPG tankers to pass through the Strait, according to officials, and one of them returned to India on Monday. Traffic has ground to a near standstill on either side of the Strait since the beginning of the war in Iran.

India said on Monday that at least 22 Indian-flagged vessels and 611 Indian seafarers remain in the Gulf. REUTERS

India said on Monday at least 22 Indian-flagged vessels and 611 Indian seafarers remain in the Gulf

Report baseless, say govt officials

Govt officials dimissed the report that Iran has asked India to "release three tankers that were seized in Feb". "This report is baseless. There has been no discussion of this nature between Indian and Iranian authorities. In any case, the three vessels are not Iranian owned," officials said. TNN

IIM-A brings Dubai students to its campus till West Asia conflict subsides

Ahmedabad: Students of the first batch of one-year executive MBA at the Dubai campus of IIM Ahmedabad (IIM-A), which started in Sept last year as the first such initiative by any of the IIMs in India, have arrived in Ahmedabad at IIM-A campus amid the Gulf war between Iran and Israel-US.

Officials of the premier B-school said the students will be in the city till the "conflict subsides".

In response to a query from TOI, IIM-A officials said the current cohort of the one-year MBA programme at Dubai is of 35 students. It is the only academic programme which is currently offered at the Dubai campus.

"We have some staff members at the IIMA Dubai campus. All the students of the current cohort were in Europe for their international immersion and, from there, they have been directly brought to the IIM Ahmedabad campus," an email response from IIM-A stated. TNN

Brent crude has seen an increase of over 40% since Iran war started

▶Continued from page 1

In any case, with elections due in four states and UT of Puducherry, the political greenlight is unlikely until the last phase of voting on April 29. In the US, gasoline prices were estimated at $3.71 a gallon on Monday, according to AAA data.

Since the war broke out, benchmark Brent crude has seen an increase of over 40%, while Russian Urals crude has risen by over 50%.

The Indian basket — which comprises sour crude from Oman and Dubai, as well as sweet grade of Brent Dated — was estimated at $70.86 a barrel on Feb 26 and rose to $127.22 on March 12, before soaring $9.34 a barrel or 7.3% to $136.46 on Friday, official data showed.

India was in a sweet spot for several months, buying discounted Russian crude, whose prices have now increased. The spike is on account of a global scarcity caused by Iran blocking the Strait of Hormuz, which accounts for 20% of global oil and gas supply. Axis Bank chief economist Neelkanth Mishra said if crude remains around $100 per barrel for a year, India's import bill would rise sharply, hurt the trade balance by about $80 billion, or 2.1% of GDP.

One India-flagged tanker arrives at Guj port, 2 others scheduled to reach today

Dipak.Dash@timesofindia.com

New Delhi: India-flagged LPG tanker Shivalik, which departed from Ras Laffan Port in Qatar carrying 46,000 tonne of LPG arrived at Mundra Port in Gujarat on Monday, after a nine-day voyage, including the passage through the conflict-hit Strait of Hormuz. Nanda Devi, another Indian-flagged LPG carrier carrying approx 46,000 tonne, is scheduled to reach Kandla Port in Gujarat early Tuesday.

Both ships are owned by the state-run Shipping Corporation of India (SCI).

Another India-flagged crude oil tanker Jag Laadki, which started voyage from UAE's Fujairah port on Saturday when the oil terminal was attacked, is scheduled to reach Mundra on Tuesday afternoon. The ship is carrying around 81,000 tonne of Murban crude, a crude grade produced by the UAE.

Sharing details of the status of the three ships, Rajesh Kumar Sinha, special secretary in shipping ministry said all Indian seafarers operating in the Persian Gulf region are safe and 22 Indian-flagged vessels are located to the west of the Strait in the Persian Gulf region.

Indian-flagged tanker, Shivalik, at Gujarat's Mundra Port on Monday

TOI has learnt that 20,000 tonne of LPG ordered by Indian Oil Corporation from Shivalik will be unloaded at Mundra and the remaining 26,000 tonne will be unloaded at New Mangalore Port.

In the case of the Nanda Devi LPG carrier, the LPG will be transferred to two daughter vessels (smaller vessels) on the sea at Vadinar, a facility of Kandla Port near Jamnagar. The consignments will then be transported to different destinations.

Officials said that Mundra Port has a special storage facility and from there gas is transferred to the Mithi Rohar location in Gandhidham through a pipeline to GAIL, and subsequently supplied to the National Gas Grid.

Sinha said that before the arrival of Shivalik at Mundra Port, documentation, priority berthing and everything had been arranged at the ports so that there was no delay in discharge of cargo.

He added that govt-owned major ports are closely monitoring vessel movements and facilitating cargo operations, offering concessions on anchorage, berth hire, storage charges, and temporary transshipment storage at Jawaharlal Nehru Port Authority (JNPA), which has also granted rebates on reefer container plug-in charges. Referring to a meeting with ports and other stakeholders, including shipping lines and exporters on Monday, Sinha said there was no report of congestion at ports.

Emirates flight from Chennai turns back after drone hits Dubai

Chennai: An Emirates flight bound for Dubai from Chennai with 206 passengers on board was forced to make a U-turn over the Arabian Sea in the early hours of Monday, reports **Venkadesan S**. The decision was taken after authorities alerted the pilot about a fire at Dubai airport triggered by drone strikes near a fuel tank facility.

The flight (EK543) took off from Chennai around 4am, but the pilot received an alert not to proceed further when the flight was flying at 34,000-ft over the Arabian Sea. Immediately, the flight returned to Chennai and landed safely around 6.45am. It was declared cancelled. Passengers were deboarded and instructed to return home and reschedule their journey.

Harini from the city, who was hoping to reach London via Dubai, said she would not be able to report to work in London due to the cancellation of the flight.

LPG situation 'worrisome', govt ups output by 36% in a fortnight

TIMES NEWS NETWORK

New Delhi: India's domestic LPG production has been ramped up by 36% in a fortnight to meet demand for domestic cylinders, even as the overall availability of cooking gas remains "worrisome", the petroleum ministry said on Monday.

Sujata Sharma, joint secretary in the ministry of petroleum and natural gas, said consumers of both domestic and commercial LPG cylinders are being encouraged to switch to piped gas. She said city gas distribution companies have rolled out incentives to promote PNG connections, including free gas worth Rs 500 for domestic consumers by Indraprastha Gas in Delhi-NCR; waiver of the Rs 500 registration charge for domestic PNG connections and security deposits for commercial consumers by Mumbai-based Mahanagar Gas; and waiver of security deposits for all commercial connections by Bharat Petroleum.

While India is relatively comfortable as far as availability of crude is concerned, officials accepted the squeeze on LPG supplies is palpable due to the closure of the Strait of Hormuz, a critical chokepoint that witnesses the transit of energy supplies to India from West Asian countries.

India imports about 90% of its crude requirement, 50% of its natural gas, and 60% of its LPG needs. More than half of India's crude imports, about 30% of gas and 85-90% of LPG imports come from West Asian countries through Hormuz.

Unlike crude, LPG does not have a strategic reserve, and officials said the gas was being arranged from whatever sources possible. While India has partly offset crude supply disruptions by sourcing oil from countries including Russia, gas supplies have been curtailed to industrial users, and LPG availability to commercial establishments such as hotels and restaurants has been limited to ensure domestic consumers do not feel the pinch.

While petroleum minister Hardeep Singh Puri had earlier said India was tapping more sources such as the US, Norway, Canada and Russia for LPG, officials on Monday refused to share details on the additional cargoes secured so far.

Sharma said no dry-outs were reported at LPG dealerships and action was being taken against hoarding and black marketing. She said online bookings are up from 84% to 90%, and delivery authentication coverage has been expanded from 53% to 72% to prevent diversion of cylinders at the distributor level.

'NO DRY-OUTS SO FAR'

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I, DHRUVAKUMAR S/o. Chandra Shekhar N, Resident at No.220,8th Cross,2nd Phase, Near J C Bekary, Manjunathanagara, Rajajinagar, Bengaluru 560010, have changed my name to DHRUVA KUMAR C vide Affidavit dated 16.03.2026 sworn before notary Chandrakala, Bengaluru
I Mahesh Edakkattuparambil Surendran S/O, Surendran R/o A 304, Celebrity Square, Sarjapura -attibelle Road, Bidaraguppe, Bengaluru, Karnataka -562107 have changed my name to Mahesh Surendran.
I, Huliamma W/O Sharanappa R/O Killar Hatti, Raichur, Upparnandihal, Dist. Raichur (Karnataka) have changed my name to NEELAMMA forever.
I, Kailash Chandra Chilkoti R/o No C-302, Span Marigold Apartment, 2nd Cross, Ganesha Layout, M.S. Palya, Vidyaranyapura Post, Bengaluru 560097 have corrected my wife's name from Rekha to Rekha Devi sworn before XXXVIII Addl Chief Judicial Magistrate Bengaluru City dated 07.03.2026.
I, Nirmala Prasanna (old name) W/O Prasanna Srinivasan residing at 126, 1st A Cross 1st Main kodichikkanahalli Bangalore 560076 changed my name to R Nirmala (new name) vide affidavit dt 26/2/26 sworn before notary M V Ganesh gowda
I, Vivek Kumar, S/o Sukumar V N, R/o No49, Prabhavathi Radiance, Flat 3, Vijayashree Layout, Kodichikkanahalli, Bengaluru – 560076 have changed my name to Vivek Kumar V S for all purposes.
I Abhishek Srivastava S/O Umaprasad Srivastava R/O Advithi Elite, Flat 105, Green House Layout, Doddathoguru, Electronic city, Bangalore-560100, have changed my name to Abhishek Shrivastava.

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NOTICE is hereby given to the general public that my client Mr. Ravikumar N has lost the Org Sale deed Doc No. KEN-1-1800/01-02 and13th page of Sale deed Doc No. JPN-1-1868/21-22 for the property bearing BBMP Khata No. 136/21/4/12, Khata No.21/4B, HL No.12, measuring 35x25=875sq ft, situated at Konanakunte, Uttarahalli Hobli, B'lore South, anyone finds return to the undersigned Law Globe-9964255277

personal
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LOSS of original documents. My client KN Krupashankar, s/o late C. Nanjunda setty, likes to inform the general public that, he has lost the original sale deed dated 14.06.2013 No BSK-1- 02791-2013-14.stored at CD NO BSKD219, in the layout ALL INDIA ING VYSYA BANK EMPLOYEES UNION, registered FIR in BCP valid number 1586617/2025 on 30.04.2025. If anybody finds the above said documents or in possession of the same, please handover the same to the undersigned at the address given below. M.Muralidhara, Advocate Room no 208, 2nd floor, Amar tower ,1st Mn Rd, Gandhinagar, Bengaluru-560009. Ph:99006 55981
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SUPRIYA SULE SAYS NCP (SP) WON'T FIELD CANDIDATE AGAINST SUNETRA PAWAR IN BARAMATI BYPOLL

ARREST WARRANTS PENDING, BADSHAH PERFORMS TO PACKED CROWD IN MORADABAD UNDER POLICE ESCORT

HACK OF THE DAY **MAKE YOUR OLD PC FEEL NEW AGAIN**

WHAT IT SOLVES: Fixes sluggish performance and long wait times caused by background apps launching during login.

WHAT TO DO: Filter for 'High Impact' apps in 'Task Manager' to reclaim processing power and slash your computer's boot time by auditing your startup list and disabling resource-heavy software.

STEPS:

1. Press **Ctrl+Shift+Esc** to open the **'Task Manager'**
2. Click the **'Startup apps'** tab
3. Find apps with **'High'** startup impact
4. Right-click non-essential software and select **'Disable'**

CAREFUL: Only disable apps you recognise; keep security software and drivers enabled for system stability.

Hacks are based on verified public sources. Readers are advised to follow official websites & updated rules

Tip from **richa.gandhi**@timesinternet

Scan for more hacks

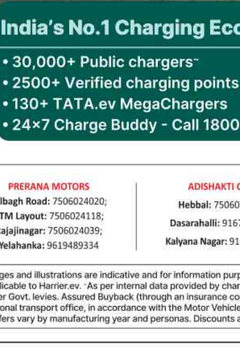
J'khand man chokes on rasgulla, dies

A 41-year-old man died after choking on a rasgulla at a wedding in Jharkhand's Jamshedpur. Doctors said the syrupy sweet blocked Lalit Singh's airways, which disrupted oxygen supply and led to his death. Lalit had difficulties in breathing after the rasgulla got stuck in his throat during the wedding in Malianta village near Jamshedpur Saturday. As his condition deteriorated, he was rushed to the city's MGM Hospital but couldn't be saved. "When food gets stuck in the windpipe (trachea) rather than the muscular food tube (oesophagus), it prevents oxygen from reaching the lungs, leading to death," said Dr Mrityunjay Kumar of MGM Hospital. TNN

STATISTICS A slice of life in numbers

US produces 1 in every 5 barrels of world's oil

In 2024, the US was the world's largest oil producer, accounting for over 20% of global output, ahead of Saudi Arabia and Russia, even as OPEC+ supply cuts shaped markets



Source: 2025 Energy Institute Statistical Review of World Energy

After Bengal chief secy & home secy, EC replaces DGP, Kol CP

ADG And IGP (Law & Order) Also Shunted

Bharti Jain, Kaushik Pradhan & Debashis Konar | TNN

New Delhi/Kolkata: A day after it substituted Bengal chief secretary and principal secretary (home) with its own choices, EC Monday replaced the DGP and Kolkata Police commissioner, among others.

Hours after announcing the assembly poll schedule for Bengal along with those of three other states and a UT, the poll panel late Sunday night shunted out Bengal chief secretary Nandini Chakravorty, replacing her with 1993-batch IAS officer Dushyant Nariala. Principal secretary (home) Jagdish Prasad Meena was replaced with 1997-batch IAS officer Sanghamitra Ghosh.

Chakravorty took over as chief secretary on Jan 1 and was the first woman appointed to the post in WB. She was also the state's first woman home secretary. This is the first time WB's top bureaucrat has been changed ahead of an election.

On Monday, EC ordered another reshuffle, shunting out DGP Peeyush Pandey and replacing him with 1992-batch IPS officer Siddh Nath Gupta. Kolkata Police commissioner Supratim Sarkar was replaced by Ajay Kumar Nand, a 1996-batch IPS officer.

EC's overriding powers to shift officers directly engaged in the conduct of polls stem from Article 324 of the Constitution, which places the entire election machinery in a poll-going state or UT under its "superintendence, direction and control". The 2021 assembly and 2024 LS polls in Bengal also saw transfers of the DGP and senior officials identified as "too close to the party in office".

"CEC Gyanesh Kumar had at the EC presser Sunday assured that elections in Bengal would be violence-free and peaceful. In pursuance of this objective, EC appointed/transferred senior police officials, including the DGP and Kolkata Police commissioner," an EC official told **TOI**. Sources indicated more transfers at the district level in the days to come, to be done in consultation with Bengal special observer N K Mishra.

Also making a change in the crucial post of ADG and IGP (law and order) — with a direct role in curbing political clashes and violence as well as ensuring judicious deployment of security forces for poll security — Election Commission replaced incumbent Vineet Goyal with 1995-batch IPS officer Ajay Mukund Ranade. Natarajan Ramesh Babu, a 1991-batch IPS officer, was ordered to be posted as DG correctional services.

In its orders, EC made it clear that these officers have been barred from all work related to the Bengal elections.

Changes in the police setup during an election season are not unprecedented. Before the 2019 LS polls, the commission had replaced Anuj Sharma with Rajesh Kumar as Kolkata Police commissioner. Since the 2016 assembly polls, Bengal CM Mamata Banerjee has brought back transferred officers to their previous posts after the elections were over.

Meanwhile in Assam, EC replaces 5 SSPs and in Tamil Nadu 4 SPs 'in interest of free & fair polls'

Bharti.Jain@timesofindia.com

New Delhi: EC Monday ordered the immediate replacement of five senior superintendents of police (SSPs) in Assam and four superintendents of police (SPs) in Tamil Nadu as part of its post-poll announcement overhaul of the police "in the interest of "free, fair, and peaceful elections".

Making key SSP-level changes in Assam, EC Monday named Somalin Shubhdarshini as SSP, Majuli; R Sheetal Kumar as SSP, South Salmara; Anchal Chauhan as SSP, Sadiya; Sudhakar Singh as SSP, Chirang; and Mohan Lal Meena as SSP, Dhemaji.

In TN, EC made changes in four districts, bringing in D N Harikiran Prasad as SP, Karur; D V Kiran Shruthi as SP, Erode; Sujith Kumar as SP, Nagapattinam; and N Shreenatha as SP, Virudhunagar.

A compliance report regarding joining of the said police officers has been sought from the Assam and Tamil Nadu secretary by 11pm Tuesday.

EC has directed that the five SSPs of Assam Police and four SPs of Tamil Nadu transferred out by EC shall not be posted in any election-related posts until completion of polls.

In two other poll-related measures taken by EC in Assam, retired civil servant Manjeet Singh, a 1988 batch IAS officer from Rajasthan cadre, was appointed as special observer in the state. He will visit Assam from time to time to observe the poll preparedness and the conduct of assembly polls and give his inputs to the EC for necessary action.

EC also appointed five IAS officers as district election officers (DEOs) in Assam, based on a list provided by Assam chief secretary. While P Uday Praveen is to be posted as DEO of Kokrajhar; Srishti Singh was named as DEO, Majuli; Kimnei Changsan as DEO of Baksa, Madhusudan Nath as DEO, Chirang and Jay Vikash as DEO, Udalguri. EC said its directions as regards appointments of DEOs are to be implemented with immediate effect and a compliance report in respect of their joining must be sent by 3 pm on Tuesday.

Meanwhile, EC has issued directions on strict implementation of model code in the poll-going states. Ministers have been told not to combine official duties with electioneering while parties have been asked to inform the police in advance of meetings and processions, to enable traffic and security arrangements.

Govt, oppn reach deal, suspension of 8 MPs to be revoked

TIMES NEWS NETWORK

New Delhi: Govt Monday agreed to Opposition's demand for revocation of the suspension of its eight MPs, who had been barred from the House for remainder of Budget session for their alleged unruly conduct in LS, and the House is expected to formalise their return Tuesday.

Official sources said a consensus was reached at an all-party meeting chaired by Speaker **Om Birla**, in which it was also decided that no MP from either side will approach the other side in protest, tear papers or throw them towards the Chair, and climb the table of officials — this is primarily aimed at Opposition members who have been accused of resorting to these disruptive tactics.

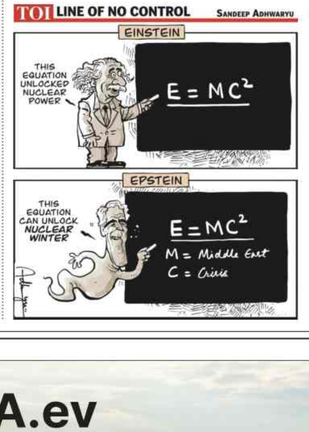
"All members would adhere to the established decorum and traditions of Parliament, and both sides would ensure such incidents are not repeated in future," an official said of the consensus reached in the meeting.

Eight opposition MPs — Gurjeet Singh Aujla, Hibi Eden, Dean Kuriakose, Amrinder Raja Warring, Manickam Tagore, Prashant Yadaorao Padole, Kiran Kumar Reddy and S Venkatesan — were suspended for the remainder of Budget session on Feb 3 for their "disruptive" conduct on a motion moved by Union parliamentary affairs minister Kiren Rijiju. Seven of them are from Congress and one from CPM.

Revoking their suspension was a major demand of opposition parties amid continued protests in the House, which have led to occasional adjournments.

'Midnight mayhem', P7

TOI LINE OF NO CONTROL SANDEEP ADHWARYU



It's Mamata vs Adhikari as BJP unveils 144 candidates

BJP Leader Set To Take On Didi In Bhowanipore

Rohit.Khanna
@timesofindia.com

BIGGIES IN FRAY 1. Suvendu Adhikari (Bhowanipore & Nandigram) 2. Dilip Ghosh (Kharagpur Sadar) 3. Swapan Dasgupta (Rashbehari) 4. Sajal Ghosh (Baranagar) 5. Agnimitra Paul (Asansol South)

Kolkata: Bengal's opposition leader Suvendu Adhikari had repeatedly signalled his intent to challenge TMC chief Mamata Banerjee in Bhowanipore, the CM's home turf in south Kolkata that has sent her to the assembly three times since 2011. On Monday, BJP named him candidate from both Bhowanipore and Nandigram, where he defeated Banerjee by 1,956 votes in 2021 — a result under challenge in Calcutta high court.

"This will be a fight to the finish," wrote BJP's Bengal co-in-charge Amit Malviya on X after the party released its first list of 144 candidates. Adhikari had switched from TMC to BJP in 2020, barely three months before elections the following year.

Among the fresh faces is Soumitra Chattopadhyay, seventh-generation descendant of Vande Mataram author Bankim Chandra Chattopadhyay. He will contest from Naihati, a Hooghly river town north of Kolkata that is also Bankim Chandra's birthplace.

Party veteran Dilip Ghosh returned to familiar turf in Kharagpur Sadar, a railway town about 120km west of Kolkata in West Midnapore district. Ghosh had represented the constituency from 2016 to 2019, defeating 10-time MLA Gyan Singh Sohanpal as a first-time candidate.

His recent reappearance on stage at PM Narendra Modi's rally in central Kolkata had signalled political rehabilitation after a setback in 2024 Lok Sabha polls, when he lost from Bardhaman-Durgapur. Journalist-turned-politician Swapan Dasgupta, a Padma Bhushan awardee and former Rajya Sabha member, will fight from Rashbehari in south Kolkata.

Kolkata Municipal Corporation councillor Sajal Ghosh has been fielded from Baranagar, an industrial suburb north of Kolkata, while actor Rudranil Ghosh will contest from Shibpur in Howrah district. The list retains 41 sitting MLAs, including assembly chief whip Shankar Ghosh, who will contest again from Siliguri in north Bengal.

Three former MLAs — Jitendra Tiwari from Pandabeswar in Paschim Bardhaman district, Samarendranath Ghosh from Karimpur in Nadia district, and Saikat Panja from Manteswar in Purba Bardhaman district — are also on the list.

The list includes 11 women, among them are Agnimitra Paul from Asansol South in Paschim Bardhaman district, Malati Rava Roy from Tufanganj in Cooch Behar district, and Chandana Bauri from Saltora in Bankura district.

The professionally diverse slate features 23 teachers, six advocates, five doctors and three retired soldiers. Three spiritual figures also appear on the list — Utpal Maharaj, Swami Mangalananda Puri, and Nikhil Banerjee.

Former Kurmi Samaj state president Rajesh Mahato, who joined BJP weeks ago, will contest from Gopiballavpur, a tribal-majority constituency in Jhargram district.

EC seeks report on 2021 and 2024 post-poll Bengal violence

Kolkata: Bengal's chief electoral officer (CEO) has directed ADG (legal) to submit a report on poll-related violence during the 2021 Bengal assembly election and the 2024 LS polls, reports **Debashis Konar**.

In a letter dated March 15, CEO Manoj Agarwal sought a list of police station-level officers under whose jurisdiction violence occurred before, during and after the elections.

Around 1,300 incidents of violence were reported in 2021, an official said. An SIT was later formed to probe the cases under the monitoring of former Calcutta high court chief justice Manjula Chellur.

The reports will include verified non-bailable warrants and lists of history-sheeters. Agarwal said, "Somebody has to take responsibility. The message is clear. Responsibility will be fixed."

The CEO has also asked Kolkata police commissioner to explain why central forces were not deployed during violence at Girish Park. The EC is prioritising cases involving crude bomb recoveries, booth capturing allegations and voter intimidation. The additional CEO has sought details of police transfers after Feb 28, including transfer orders.

EC transfers 'midnight mayhem', says Mamata

Sarthak.G@timesofindia.com

During her roadshow, Mamata Banerjee also alleged 'a plot to kill her'

Kolkata: West Bengal CM Mamata Banerjee Monday countered PM Narendra Modi's "hisab liya jayega" speech, telling him that such threats did not suit a country's PM. Banerjee also alleged that a plot was being hatched to murder her. "The PM will have to take responsibility if something happens," she said during a College Street-to-Esplanade roadshow on Monday, her first after the EC's announcement of the poll schedule for Bengal, three other states and a UT.

Banerjee also criticised EC for its Sunday night order transferring two of Bengal's top bureaucrats — chief secretary Nandini Chakravorty and home secretary J P Meena — terming its "midnight mayhem" and accusing it of being "anti-women" for transferring out Bengal's first female chief secretary.

"I got a message at midnight... Have you heard of such a thing happening at midnight," she asked the crowd after her march to highlight the LPG crisis. "The chief secretary was a Bengali woman. They are anti-women. The rule is to ask the state for a list. We used to send three names and they would select one," she added.

"This is su moto! It is like a lawless land, like a feudal estate," she said.

The CM also accused the EC of being "anti-Hindu" and "anti-Hindi". "Who was the DGP? It was Peeyush Pandey. He was also dismissed without a word. You are not only knocking out Bengalis but also non-Bengalis. You are looking for those who will work for BJP. But, whoever you send, they will work for us. They will work for the people," she said, adding that about 50% of those who died because of "SIR-related pressure and anxiety" were Hindus.

Banerjee alleged BJP was offering cash to people and police commissioner Supratim Sarkar was removed to enable ferrying of cash into the state.

SIR shadow on TMC mantris' poll prospects

Several MLAs of Bengal's governing Trinamool whose names figure in the SIR judicial adjudication list, including cabinet minister Shashi Panja, remain anxious over their electoral status even as the party is set to announce its list of candidates.

Panja questioned a poll observer during an all-party meeting on Monday about the fate of such potential candidates. "The EC has no clear answer. I never faced a situation like this, when a day before the announcement of candidates' names, I don't even know whether I am eligible as a voter," she said. Fellow ministers Tajmul Hossain and Gholam Rabbani echoed the frustration. In Murshidabad, a string of politicians, including Jangipur MLA Jakir Hossain, Sagardighi MLA Byron Biswas were on the list. TNN

CPM veteran revolts, to fight party nominee

Kannur: In a setback for CPM in its bastion, Kannur district secretariat member T K Govindan Monday severed his nearly six-decade-long ties with the party and announced he would contest as an Independent from Taliparamba against party candidate P K Shyamala.

Govindan, 75, told a news conference that he was ending his association with the party in protest against Shyamala's candidature, which he said "does not conform to political ethics".

He alleged that seniority and other factors were ignored in candidate selection. "What happened in Taliparamba is unfortunate. It goes against the party's ethics and organisational norms," he said. He claimed that Shyamala's candidature had faced strong criticism in the district committee and that these concerns, conveyed to the state leadership, were ignored. TNN & AGENCIES

Rajeev Chandrasekhar, George Kurian in BJP 1st list for Kerala

TIMES NEWS NETWORK

Kerala BJP state secretary and NDA candidate from Nemom constituency Rajeev Chandrasekhar during a roadshow in Thiruvananthapuram

T'puram: BJP on Monday announced its first list of 47 candidates for the Kerala assembly election, with Union minister George Kurian to fight from Kanjirappally, while the party's state president Rajeev Chandrasekhar will contest from Nemom seat and former Union minister V Muraleedharan will once again seek mandate from Kazhakkoottam.

K Surendran, former state president of the party, will contest from Manjeswar, a seat he lost by a whisker in 2021. Former DGP and Sasthamangalam corporation ward councillor R Sreelekha has been fielded from Vattiyoorkavu, while BJP state vice-president C Krishnakumar will contest from Malampuzha. Sobha Surendran has been given the Palakkad seat while R Reshmi, former state general secretary of Mahila Congress who switched to BJP last month, will contest from Kottarakkara.

The BJP central election committee, chaired by party president Nitin Nabin, finalised the candidates for the 47 seats at a meeting that was also attended by PM Modi and Union minister Amit Shah.

Other candidates named in the list include A P Gangadharan (Payyannur), C Raghunath (Kannur), Kavitha A S (Sultan Bathery - ST), Navya Haridas (Kozhikode North), T Raneesh (Kozhikode South), Padmaja Venugopal (Thrissur), A Ajith (Vaikom-SC), B Gopalkumar (Chathannur), P Sudheer (Attingal), Yuvaraj Gokul (Nedumangad).

Nitish among 5 NDA winners from Bihar

▸ Continued from page 1

All five NDA candidates — outgoing CM Nitish Kumar, new BJP president Nitin Nabin, Union minister Ram Nath Thakur, Rashtriya Lok Morcha president Upendra Kushwaha and state BJP general secretary Shivesh Kumar — won the biennial elections to fill five Upper House berths that will be vacated on April 9. All 202 NDA MLAs voted, and no cross-voting was reported. Among the NDA candidates, Nitish and Nitin each polled 44 votes while Ram Nath and Upendra received 42 each. Shivesh had 30 first-preference votes, crossing the threshold on second-preference counting.

In Odisha, 11 instances of cross-voting — eight by BJD members and three by Congress — handed BJP-backed Independent Dilip Ray the fourth Rajya Sabha seat, defeating BJD and Congress's joint candidate Datteswar Hota. BJP nominees Manmohan Samal and Sujeet Kumar won comfortably, as did BJD's Sanjrupt Misra. BJD, with 50 MLAs 0— including two suspended members — had fielded two candidates, hoping to win one seat on its own and had tied up with Congress's 14 to secure a second. Cross-voting upended that arithmetic.

BJD president and former chief minister Naveen Patnaik accused BJP of horse-trading, saying most non-BJP MLAs who backed the governing party had "criminal backgrounds". Chief minister Mohan Charan Majhi termed the remarks "immature" and said Patnaik had "insulted not just the MLAs by calling them criminals, but also the voters who elected them".

Odisha PCC president Bhakta Charan Das described the defection of three Congress MLAs — Sofia Firdous, Ramesh Jena and Dasarathi Gamango — as "unexpected". He said the matter had been referred to the party high command. For Ray, the script was a familiar one. The former Union minister, who has declared assets totalling Rs 456 crore in his affidavit, won a Rajya Sabha seat in 2002 under near-identical circumstances. On that occasion, he was contesting as an Independent after being expelled from BJD and was carried through by large-scale cross-voting.

First nominated to the Upper House in 1996, he served two consecutive terms, joined BJP in 2009 and won the Rourkela assembly seat in 2014. A key figure in BJD's formation, Ray had been convicted by a special CBI court on Oct 6, 2020, in a 1998 coal block allocation case dating back to his tenure as junior coal minister in the Atal Bihari Vajpayee govt. Delhi high court stayed his conviction in April 2024.

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4 killed and 3 hurt in Itanagar wall collapse

Itanagar: Four people were killed and three others injured after a landslide triggered the collapse of a protection wall of a building at Niti Vihar in Arunachal Pradesh's capital around 4pm on Monday reports **Joken Ete**.

Seven workers at the site were buried under the debris after a wall of the building under construction collapsed, officials said.

Rescue teams pulled out seven people and four of them were found dead, while the other three were admitted to hospital.

Rescue work was hampered due to continuous rainfall, posing challenges for the teams to locate the trapped victims.

7 on ICU beds die in Odisha hosp fire

▶Continued from page 1

Seven of 23 patients across two ICUs died in their beds while three succumbed to their injuries while being moved to a portion of the hospital untouched by flames. A 45-year-old man and an 11-year-old girl died later in the medicine ICU, ward in-charge Jayant Panda said.

CM Mohan Charan Majhi ordered a judicial probe led by retired district judge Laxmidhar Biswal and announced ex gratia of Rs 25 lakh each to the families of the victims. A separate six-member fact-finding team headed by development commissioner Deoranjan Kumar Singh will assess the hospital's safety infrastructure and preparedness.

The charred equipment and beds at a trauma centre of SCB Medical College and Hospital after the fire incident in Cuttack on Monday

President Droupadi Murmu and PM Narendra Modi, too, condoled the deaths. The PM announced a grant of Rs 2 lakh each from the PM's National Relief Fund to the kin of the deceased and Rs 50,000 for the injured.

Hospital sources said the blaze followed a small fire from an electrical spark in the first-floor trauma ICU that had been quickly attended to and doused. Till late Monday, there was no clarity on whether the same spark or an undetected fault elsewhere was the source of the massive fire that coursed through the ward and two upper floors moments later.

The fire services department reported a gap of more than 15 minutes between the initial warning signs and firefighters on campus being alerted. Director general of fire services Sudhansu Sarangi said the department received a call on the emergency number 112 at 2.58am. "Fire engines reached the spot within two minutes," he said.

Health secretary S Aswathy said 11 staffers of the hospital were among the injured. "They suffered injuries while helping rescue and evacuate patients. They are all out of danger," she said.

"My sister-in-law Menaka Rout, 54, was recovering after suffering a head injury in a fall on March 1. She was expected to be out of the ICU this week. Who could have imagined something like this would happen," said Niranjan Swain of Kendrapada.

Ghanshyam Behera of Daspalla stood outside the hospital building hours after the fire, looking distraught as the enormity of the tragedy sunk in. "Black fumes blanketed the ward in quick time. I carried my father on my shoulders and ran outside," he said.

Ghanshyam's father Jadumani has since been shifted to the orthopaedic ICU.

89-yr-old in Mumbai ICU dies of 'rat-bite'

Vishal Rajemahadik | TNN

Mira-Bhayandar: An 89-year-old woman undergoing treatment in the intensive care unit (ICU) of the Pandit Bhimsen Joshi Govt Hospital in Bhayandar (West) was allegedly bitten by a rat on Sunday night. A few hours later, the patient, Suhasini Matekar, died. A medical officer and a nursing staff member were transferred to Thane civil hospital with immediate effect.

The incident came to light on Monday morning when the patient's relatives visited the hospital and noticed that there were injuries to the patient's hand that looked like a rat had gnawed at it. The family claimed the doctors and nursing staff on duty were unaware of it until they pointed it out.

Locals raised questions about the management and hygiene standards at the govt-run hospital, especially when rats are found on the fourth floor of a hospital.

Milan Desai, daughter of the patient, who is an office-bearer of the Shiv Sena (UBT), said she had noticed the presence of rats in the ICU earlier as well and seen rat footprints. She said she had seen rats on Monday morning too.

She alleged her mother died because of loss of blood due to rat-bites. She alleged that the last check-up was done by the staff nurse around 2.30 am on Monday.

Deve Gowda to Sonia: Step in and stop Cong MPs' House disruption

TIMES NEWS NETWORK

New Delhi: Saying that it may be his last Parliamentary session, former PM **H D Deve Gowda** on Monday asked Sonia Gandhi to intervene to stop Congress MPs, especially the leader of opposition, to provoke further disruptions as it is likely to harm the foundations of democracy and leave indelible bitterness.

In a letter, Devegowda (92), whose Rajya Sabha term is set to end in June, invoked Sonia's wealth of experience and her conduct in opposition with "grace and maturity" to urge her to ask Congress MPs to dial down their "too many disruptions inside Parliament and on its premise".

Gowda said Congress MPs, led by the leader of opposition, have provoked far too many disruptions. Their dharnas and blockades outside Parliament are unprecedented, he said, adding that the legislature in recent times has witnessed an excess of slogan-shouting, display of placards and name-calling, he said.

While Rahul Gandhi is the LoP in Lok Sabha, which has witnessed frequent protests, Mallikarjun Kharge holds the position in Rajya Sabha. In a swipe at Rahul who was spotted joining his protesting colleagues at the entrance of Parliament having tea and biscuits, he said opposition used to protest with a restraint that national interest demands and did not block the entrance to Parliament, making their gathering look like a tea-shop assembly.

Deve Gowda told the Congress veteran, "You can perhaps ask them (Cong MPs) not to harm themselves, their cause and their political futures in the long run. I believe that the opposition must protest as much as it wants but that protest has to be framed in a way that does not dismantle what we have built together in over 75 glorious years."

Sonia is also an MP in the Upper House and is the Congress parliamentary party chairperson. "There has been an attitude of non-seriousness, which has assaulted my very idea and construct of Parliament and Parliamentary democracy," he said.

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Source: AIM Network - Analytics India Magazine

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A TIMES INTERNET INITIATIVE

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tgthr./02/26/200

ಬೆಂಗಳೂರು ಅಂತರರಾಷ್ಟ್ರೀಯ ವಿಮಾನ ನಿಲ್ದಾಣ ಪ್ರದೇಶ ಯೋಜನಾ ಪ್ರಾಧಿಕಾರ, ದೇವನಹಳ್ಳಿ

ಸಿ.ಎ ನಿವೇಶನ ಖಾತ ಸಂಖ್ಯೆ:31-511-371, ವಾರ್ಡ್ ನಂ-20, ಅಂಬಿಕಾ ಲೇಔಟ್, ಸೌತೇಗೌಡನಹಳ್ಳಿ ಗ್ರಾಮ, ಸೂಲಿಬೆಲೆ ರಸ್ತೆ, ಕಸಬಾ ಹೋಬಳಿ, ದೇವನಹಳ್ಳಿ ಟೌನ್, ಬೆಂಗಳೂರು ಗ್ರಾಮಾಂತರ ಜಿಲ್ಲೆ-562110

ದಿನಾಂಕ: 13.03.2026

ಅಲ್ಪಾವಧಿ ಇ-ಹರಾಜು ಪ್ರಕಟಣೆ

ಬೆಂಗಳೂರು ಅಂತರರಾಷ್ಟ್ರೀಯ ವಿಮಾನ ನಿಲ್ದಾಣ ಪ್ರದೇಶ ಯೋಜನಾ ಪ್ರಾಧಿಕಾರದಲ್ಲಿ ಲಭ್ಯವಿರುವ ಹೆಚ್ಚುವರಿ ನಿಧಿ ರೂ. 37,00,00,000/- ಕೋಟಿಗಳನ್ನು ಒಂದು ವರ್ಷದ ಅವಧಿಗೆ ಮೀರದಂತೆ ನಿಶ್ಚಿತ ಠೇವಣಿಯಲ್ಲಿ ಹೂಡಿಕೆ ಮಾಡುವ ಸಲುವಾಗಿ ಅರ್ಹ ರಾಷ್ಟ್ರೀಕೃತ ಬ್ಯಾಂಕ್‌ಗಳಿಂದ ಕರ್ನಾಟಕ ಸರ್ಕಾರದ ಇ-ಪ್ರೊಕ್ಯೂರ್‌ಮೆಂಟ್ ಪೋರ್ಟಲ್ ಮೂಲಕ TPA/2025-26/AUCTION77 ರಲ್ಲಿ ಇ-ಹರಾಜು ಪ್ರಕ್ರಿಯೆ ಕೈಗೊಳ್ಳಲಾಗಿದ್ದು, ಆಸಕ್ತಿಯುಳ್ಳ ರಾಷ್ಟ್ರೀಕೃತ ಬ್ಯಾಂಕ್‌ಗಳವರು ದಿನಾಂಕ: **13.03.2026** ರಿಂದ ದಿನಾಂಕ: **27.03.2026** ರ ಸಮಯ **ಸಂಜೆ 4:00 ಗಂಟೆ** ಒಳಗೆ ಇ-ಹರಾಜು ಪೋರ್ಟಲ್‌ನಲ್ಲಿ ದಸ್ತಾವೇಜುಗಳನ್ನು ಅಪ್‌ಲೋಡ್ ಮಾಡಬಹುದು ಹಾಗೂ ಹೆಚ್ಚಿನ ವಿವರಗಳಿಗೆ ವೆಬ್‌ಸೈಟ್ ವಿಳಾಸ: https://kppp.karnataka.gov.in ನಲ್ಲಿ ಪರಿಶೀಲಿಸಿಕೊಳ್ಳಬಹುದು.

ಸಹಿ/-, ನಗರ ಮತ್ತು ಗ್ರಾಮಾಂತರ ಯೋಜನಾ ಜಂಟಿ ನಿರ್ದೇಶಕರು ಹಾಗೂ ಸದಸ್ಯ ಕಾರ್ಯದರ್ಶಿಗಳು, ಬೆಂಗಳೂರು ಅಂತರರಾಷ್ಟ್ರೀಯ ವಿಮಾನ ನಿಲ್ದಾಣ ಪ್ರದೇಶ ಯೋಜನಾ ಪ್ರಾಧಿಕಾರ, ದೇವನಹಳ್ಳಿ

ವಾಸಾಸಂ/ಪಾಪ್ರ/ಎಲ್‌ಸಿ/6297/2025-26

CREATIVE MUSEUM DESIGNERS

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Registered Office: CRTL Building II, NCSM Campus, 33, Block GN, Sector V, Bidhannagar, Kolkata 700091.

NOTICE INVITING TENDER FOR DESIGN DEVELOPMENT, FABRICATION, SUPPLY AND INSTALLATION OF A FRP MURAL AT THE CENTRAL MUSEUM, ANTHROPOLOGICAL SURVEY OF INDIA

Tender No. CMD 007.12.67(WORKS)/25-26/71

Tenders are invited from credible and professional parties for the work of **"DESIGN DEVELOPMENT, FABRICATION, SUPPLY AND INSTALLATION OF A FRP MURAL AT THE CENTRAL MUSEUM, ANTHROPOLOGICAL SURVEY OF INDIA (AnSI), KOLKATA."**
The tender document can be downloaded from the official website at **www.cmdncsm.in**. Interested parties must submit a signed hard copy of the tender documents by 3:00 PM on April 06, 2026, together with the necessary supporting documentation.

Kolkata 17-03-2026 — Managing Director

IRCON INTERNATIONAL LIMITED

NAVRATNA COMPANY
(A Govt. of India Undertaking)
Website: www.ircon.org, CIN - L45203DL1976GOI008171

e-Procurement Notice

e-Tender No.: IRCON/e-Tender/B1100009/MSME/TC/IE/ET-54 — Dated 16.03.2026

Bids are invited from bidders meeting qualifying requirements for **"Independent Engineer Services for Development of MSME Technology Centres at 20 Locations across India under the Scheme "Establishment of New Technology Centres/Extension Centres"** as per details given below:

Estimated Cost of the Work	Rs. 8.85 Crore (Incl. GST)
Tender Document Fee	Rs. 20,000/-
Earnest Money Deposit (EMD)	Rs. 9.75 Lakh
Completion Period	24 Months

Tender Documents will be available on e-tender portal website https://etenders.gov.in/eprocure/app w.e.f. **17.03.2026** and last date of submission of above tenders is **06.04.2026 upto 15.00 hrs.** Corrigendum, if any, would be hosted only on the website.

Executive Director/VME
C-4, District Centre, Saket, New Delhi-110017, email-masood.ahmad@ircon.org

NBCC (INDIA) LIMITED

(A Government of India Enterprise)

E-AUCTION NOTICE

NBCC (India) Limited invites bids for outright sale of freehold land (0.99 acres) at Krishnaswamy Nagar, Pankaja Mills Road, Coimbatore, Tamil Nadu, **through e-auction on "as is where is" basis.**
E-Auction Document available at www.nbccindia.in (Buy Properties) and **https://nbccauction.enivida.com.**
Last date for registration: 28.03.2026.
Corrigendum/Addendum, if any, on above websites only.

NBCC (INDIA) LIMITED, RBG (SOUTH)
Old Railway Station Road, Kombara, Kochi Kerala-682018
rbg.south@nbccindia.com

KARNATAKA VIDYUTH KARKHANE LIMITED

(A Government of Karnataka Undertaking)
P. B. No. 2610, Mysuru Road, Bengaluru- 560 026
Ph: 080-26749045, 26987200, 26748274

KAVIKA/DM-P&A/DGM1/2025-26 — Date: 16.03.2026

TENDER NOTIFICATION

Tenders through KPP Portal mode are invited for supplying following Services to Karnataka Vidyuth Karkhane Limited, Mysuru Road, Bengaluru.

A. Service Tenders

(1) Providing Manpower Services to KAVIKA Bengaluru.
(2) Providing Security & Allied Services to KAVIKA Bengaluru.
(3) Providing Hosuekeeping Services to KAVIKA Bengaluru.

The detailed notification/specification can be obtained by logging on to e-Procurement website: **https://kppp.karnataka.gov.in** on or after **17.03.2026** as well as the process of participation/EMD/Tender fees etc.

Sd/- DEPUTY GENERAL MANAGER-1

Rajasthan Medical Services Corporation Ltd.

D-Block, Swasthya Bhawan, C-Scheme, Jaipur - 302005
Ph. No. 0141-2223887, Fax No. 0141-2228065, E-Mail-edepmrmsc-rj@nic.in

Ref. No. : F-8( ) RMSC/EPM/M-4/NIB-933/2025-26/1817 — Dated :- 10/03/2026

CORRIGENDUM / ADDENDUM

Bid for item:
1. Deep Freezer, Fowler Bed, Stead Bed, Foot Step, Syringe Infusion Pump, Glucostrip & Pulse Oxymeter (Handheld),
2. White Box (Sharp Container), & Transport Trolley (Wheel Barrow) Reserve for MSE, Rajasthan Only

are invited from interested bidders up to Date: 18-03-2026 : 06:00 P.M. Other particulars of the bid may be visited on Procurement portal website **https://sppp.rajasthan.gov.in or www.dipronline.org** or **https://eproc.rajasthan.gov.in** or website **http://rmsc.health.rajasthan.gov.in.**

UBN : MSC2526GLOB00056

Executive Director (EPM)
Rajasthan Medical Services Corporation

Raj.Samwad/C/25/22586

BOI — Bank of India

Head Office, IT (Governance & Excellence) Department, Star House-3, PNB-BOI Tower, C-29, G Block, 10th Floor, Bandra-Kurla Complex, Bandra (E), Mumbai-400051.
E-mail: Headoffice.ITProc@bankofindia.bank.in

REQUEST FOR PROPOSAL (RFP) FOR

Supply, Installation, Configuration, Customization, Implementation, Maintenance, Support for Microsoft Office 365 Solution
Ref No: BOI:HO:IT(G&E): O365:1242, Dated 13.03.2026
GeM Bid No. GEM/2026/B/7355743 Dated 13.03.2026
The captioned RFP is available on Bank's corporate website www.bankofindia.bank.in under "Tender" section & GeM portal. Subsequent changes if any, will henceforth be uploaded on the Bank's website & GeM portal. The last date of bid submission: 27.03.2026

bida भिवाड़ी इंटिग्रेटेड विकास प्राधिकरण

एच-5, भगतसिंह कॉलोनी, भिवाड़ी, अलवर
दूरभाष : 01493 230819 ई-मेल:- bida.bhiwadi@rajasthan.gov.in

क्रमांक: / बीडा / अभि. / 6717 / 26 — दिनांक : 10.03.2026

Notice Inviting Bid

Bid for **"DEVELOPMENT & RENOVATION WORK OF ROAD FROM BHIWADI MOD TO KHIJURIWAS TOLL, BHIWADI"**, is invited from interested Bidders up to 02.00 PM date 30.03.2026 Other particulars of the bid may be visited on the procurement portal **http://eproc.rajasthan.gov.in** & **http://sppp.raj.nic.in** of the state; and **https://bida.rajasthan.gov.in** departmental website.

UBN : BDA2526WLOB00141

Executive Engineer
BIDA, Bhiwadi

Raj.Samwad/C/25/22585

PSPCL Punjab State Power Corporation Limited

(Regd. Office :- PSEB, Head Office, The Mall, Patiala-147001)
Corporate identity Number : U40109PB2010SGC033813
Website : www.pspcl.in (Contact number 96461-17607)

TENDER ENQUIRY No. : 34/AHP-148(N)/ MM-II/O&M Dtd. 16.03.2026.

Dy. C.E./MM-II/O&M, GHTP, Lehra Mohabbat-151111 invites e-tender for the Work of Operation & Maintenance and General Cleanliness of PLC based Complete Ash Handling Plant Stage-I and Stage-II units along with operation & routine maintenance of 1 No. 100 MT electronic pitless weighbridge and issuing of Excise Gate Pass cum Invoices to each dry fly ash loading trucks and Work of Decantation of LDO/HSD/HPS/HFO wagons /BTPN wagons / Tankers and general House Keeping and maintenance of Decantation system & storage tank area at GHTP Lehra Mohabbat. For detailed NIT & tender specification please refer to **https://eproc.punjab.gov.in** from 16.03.2026 from 12:00 AM onwards.

Note : Corrigendum and addendum, if any will be uploaded online at **https://eproc.punjab.gov.in**

GHTP-31/26, DPR/Pb.:1079/12/2025-26/9518

ಉಪ ನಿರ್ದೇಶಕರರವರ ಕಛೇರಿ ಶ್ರೀ ಚಾಮರಾಜೇಂದ್ರ ಮೃಗಾಲಯ, ಮೈಸೂರು

ಮೃಗಾಲಯ ರಸ್ತೆ, ಇಂದಿರಾ ನಗರ, ಇಟ್ಟಿಗೆ ಗೂಡು, ಮೈಸೂರು
ಇ-ಮೇಲ್: zoomysore@gmail.com | ವೆಬ್‌ಸೈಟ್: www.mysorezoo.org

ಸಂಖ್ಯೆ: ಎಂವೈಜೆಡ್/ಟೆಂಡರ್/2025-26 — ದಿನಾಂಕ: 13.03.2026

ಟೆಂಡರ್ ಪ್ರಕಟಣೆ (ಇ-ಪ್ರೊಕ್ಯೂರ್‌ಮೆಂಟ್ ಪದ್ಧತಿಯಲ್ಲಿ ಮಾತ್ರ)

ಈ ಕಚೇರಿ ಟೆಂಡರ್ ಪ್ರಕಟಣೆಯ ಕಾಮಗಾರಿಗಳನ್ನು 1) **ಕೆ.ಡಬ್ಲ್ಯೂ-4ರ Indent No.149/25-26 Dt. 13.03.2026** ಅನ್ವಯ ಐಟಂವಾರು ಟೆಂಡರ್ ಆಹ್ವಾನಿಸಲಾಗಿದ್ದು, ಟೆಂಡರ್ ಸಲ್ಲಿಸುವ ದಿನಾಂಕವನ್ನು ಹಾಗೂ ಇತರೆ ವಿವರಗಳನ್ನು ಇ-ಪೋರ್ಟಲ್ **(https://kppp.karnataka.gov.in)** ನಲ್ಲಿ ಪಡೆಯಬಹುದು.

ಸಹಿ/- ಉಪನಿರ್ದೇಶಕರು
ಶ್ರೀ ಚಾಮರಾಜೇಂದ್ರ ಮೃಗಾಲಯ, ಮೈಸೂರು.

DIPR/MYS/1839/SA/2025-26

Government of Karnataka
Office of the Executive Engineer, Minor Irrigation And Ground Water Development Division, Ballari

IFT No. EE/MI & GWDD/Bly/AE-2/2025-26/2341
Date :13.03.2026

TENDER NOTIFICATION(KW-4)

On behalf of Hon'ble Governor of Karnataka the Executive Engineer, Minor Irrigation and Ground Water Development Division Ballari invited the tender for the work of under **Head for Account 4702 Plan LIS** for 01 work in Hosapete Taluk Vijayanagara Dist in Two Cover System **Estimated amount put to tender is Rs.112.93 lakhs** the tenderers should download and submit the tenders from **date : 12.03.2026 to 20.03.2026 upto 17.30 hours. Date & Time of opening Technical Bid is on 23.03.2026 at 11.00 hours. Opening of Financial Bid is on 25.03.2026 at 11.00 hours.** Any other information should get by login the website **"KPPP"** http://kppp.karnataka.gov.in

Sd/- Executive Engineer,
M.I. & G.W.D. Division, Ballari.

DIPR/Ballari/1144/KSMCA/2025-26

MSME TECHNOLOGY CENTRE

MINISTRY OF MICRO, SMALL & MEDIUM ENTERPRISES, GOVT. OF INDIA

2 DAYS GOVERNMENT CERTIFICATE PROGRAM ON
INCOME TAX PRACTITIONER

Course Duration 2 Days — (ONLINE) — Date: 21 & 22 March 2026 Time : 5:00 PM to 8:30 PM

Course Content: INCOME TAX RETURN FILING PROCESS, Slab Rates of Income Tax,Heads of Income,Income from Salary, Deductions from Salary, Clubbing of Income, Income from House Property,Home Loan Interest Deduction,Income from Business / Profession,Concept of Depreciation,Income from Capital Gains,Income from Other Sources Set off / Carry forward of losses,Deductions from Income (80C, 80D etc.), Forms for ITR, **TDS RETURN FILING & TCS provisions** More Topics

Fees : Rs.3,000/- (Study material in soft copy shall be provided)

Coordinator: 9818676612, 9818528498, 9686564246

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6001/41/2526

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www.omfed.com

The Odisha State Co-operative Milk Producers' Federation Limited

D-2, Sahid Nagar, Bhubaneswar-751007
PH NO.: 0674-2546030, 2540273, 2540417, 2540974
E-mail ID: omfed@yahoo.com

E-Tender

OMFED invites for Contract for steam design, supply, installation operation & maintenance (O&M) of 10 MTPH solid multi fuel fired Biomass boiler on Built, Own, Operate and Transfer (BOOT) basis for a period of 07 years in our main Dairy plant at Omfed Dairy. The e-tender is invited on-line through 'e'-procurement of Govt. of Odisha web Portal **https://tendersodisha.gov.in** and **http://www.omfed.com**. The Bid documents will be available in the website: **https://tendersodisha.gov.in** from 10.00 AM of 17.03.2026 to 05.00 PM of 08.04.2026. The technical bid shall be opened at 03.00 PM. of 08.04.2026 at OMFED Corporate office in the presence of the interested bidders. The Management reserves the right to accept or reject any or all the bid document or part thereof without assigning any reason.

Sd/-
Managing Director
DIPR-6001/6003/125-26/0026

MUNICIPAL CORPORATION CHANDIGARH

TENDER NOTICE

Sr. No.	Name of Work	Bid Submission Schedule (Online)	Opening Technical Bid (Online)
EXECUTIVE ENGINEER - Roads Division No. 2			
1.	Scarifying and Re-carpeting of Various Roads and Parking under Road Sub Division No.6, M.C, Chandigarh for the year 2026 - 2027 (V - 4 Road Sector 46, V - 6 Road Sector 45 A&B, Parking front and backside of Uttam Sweet Sector 46/C and Parking infront of K&U Hospital Sector 46/D) Est. Cost : Rs. 292.29 Lacs — Earnest Money : Rs. 5,84,584/- Time Limit : 09 Months	14.03.2026 To 21.03.2026 upto 12.00 noon	21.03.2026 at 12.00 noon
EXECUTIVE ENGINEER - Roads Division No. 3			
2.	Reconstruction of flooring in back service lanes in Sector 15A, B & C, Chandigarh. Capital Head : Imp. of Road / Parking Places and Infrastructure Facilities. Est. Cost : Rs. 170.37 Lacs — Earnest Money : Rs. 3,40,740/- Time Limit : 06 Months	16.03.2026 To 30.03.2026 upto 12.00 noon	30.03.2026 at 15.00 PM

Note :- 1) Tender Notice alongwith detailed terms and conditions is available/uploaded on website at www.chandigarh.gov.in or etenders.chd.nic.in

EXECUTIVE ENGINEER
Roads Division No.2, Room No.304, M.C. Chandigarh
and Roads Division No.3, Room No.311, M.C. Chandigarh. Ph. 0172-5021482 xenroad3.mcc@chd.nic.in

CBIC TUMAKURU INDUSTRIAL TOWNSHIP LTD

CBIC TITL

(A Joint Venture of Govt of India & Govt of Karnataka)
(CIN : U74999KA2018PLC118247)
Reg. Office: No.49, 5th Floor, 'East Wing', Khanija Bhavan, Race Course Road, Bengaluru-560 001.
Phone: 91-80-22265383, email: mdcbic24@gmail.com

No.CBICTITL/CFO/FIN/237/2025-26 — **Date: 16.03.2026**

PAPER PUBLICATION

This is to inform that CBIC-Tumakuru Industrial Township Ltd (CBIC-TITL), intends to invest its Surplus Funds in the short term deposits with Nationalized Banks. The details of the quantum of amount and period to be kept in short term deposits are as under:

Sl.No.	Amount	Period	Terms
1	Rs. 80.00 Crores	For 3 Months (90 days)	Callable

The complete details of E-Auction can be downloaded from the e-portal of the Government of Karnataka at the below address: **https://kppp.karnataka.gov.in.**

Schedule of Various Events For E-Auction is as below :

Sl.No.	Particulars	Dates
1	Date of E-Auction Bid Document can be Downloaded until:	**24.03.2026** on or before **11.00 Hrs**
2	Last Date to upload the Declaration in Annexure-B in the e-portal:	**24.03.2026** on or before **12.00 Hrs**
3	Date and time of opening:	**26.03.2026** after **13.00 Hrs**
4	Live Bidding:	**27.03.2026** Commences at **11.00 Hrs** & Concludes at **13.00 Hrs**

Sd/-
Chief Financial Officer, CBIC-TITL, Bengaluru

DIPR/CP/6282/Zen/2025-26

HEALTH AND FAMILY WELFARE DEPARTMENT

ENGINEERING WING

Office of the Chief Engineer, Arogya Soudha, 3rd Floor, Leprosy Hospital Premises, 1st Cross, Magadi Road, Bengaluru-560 023 Telephone No.080-29557023 E-mail:**cekhsdrp@gmail.com**

No:HFWD/EW/CE/TA-3/AE-1/TND/2025-26/4483 — Date:16.03.2026

TENDER NOTIFICATION

The Chief Engineer, H&FWD, Engineering Wing, Bengaluru invites tender from eligible Contractors registered in KPWD in two Cover tender document system through Karnataka Public Procurement portal for the following work.

Sl. No.	Description of works	Amount put to tender (Rs. in lakhs)	EMD (Rs.in Lakhs)	Stipulated period for Completion (including monsoon)
1	Construction of 125 Bed Multispecialty Hospital at Sy No.55 **Bellahalli Village,** Yelahanka Hobli, Bengaluru North Taluk, Bengaluru.	5124.25	51.25	18 Months
2	Construction of 125 Bed Multispecialty Hospital at **Hebbal Constituency, GKVK premises,** Bengaluru North Taluk, Bengaluru	5123.95	51.24	18 Months
3	Renovation and Establishing of **Metropolitan Surveillance Unit at existing Public Health Institute (PHI) Building,** Sheshadri Road, Bengaluru (Deposit Work)	257.52	3.87	09 Months

Calendar of Events: (1) Last date for receipt of tenders **:15.04.2026 up to 16.00 hrs. (2)** Date of Opening of Tenders (Technical Bids): **16.04.2026 at 16.01 hrs.**

The tender details can be downloaded from the KPPP portal platform. Tenders shall be submitted electronically at **https://kppp.karnataka.gov.in** and tender processing fee shall also be paid electronically. Interested eligible contractors shall register on the e-procurement platform to participate in this tender.

NOTE: 1. All the rights are reserved by the undersigned for postponement or cancellation of entire tender process, rejection of bids /individual bid etc., without assigning any reason. 2. Henceforth, any changes in the schedule/contents will not be published through Newspapers and further changes will be updated only on Karnataka Public Procurement Portal Platform.

Sd/- Chief Engineer, H&FWD, Engineering Wing, Bengaluru

Dept of Agriculture Marketing
AGRICULTURAL PRODUCE MARKET COMMITTEE, RAMDURG

DIST: BELAGAVI — STATE : KARNATAKA.
Email-apmcramdurga@gmail.com PH NO-08335-242134, 241977

SI No:APMC/RMD/DEV/RIDF-31/1311/2025-26 DATE:12/03/2026

E-PROCUREMENT TENDER NOTIFICATION

Tender invited from the registered eligible contractors through KPPP Portal for the following work Providing Infrastructure Facilities at MMY and Katkol SMY of APMC Ramdurg under RIDF-31 Scheme.

Name of work: Providing Infrastructure Facilities at MMY and Katkol SMY of APMC Ramdurg under RIDF-31 Scheme. 1) APMC/2025-26/RD/Work_INDENT8572 2) Tender From Details : Item Wise E-Tender KW-4 3) Amount Put to Tender (Exclusive of GST) :Rs4,16,03,558.17 4) EMD Amount : Rs. 6,24,100.00 EMD Amount & tender conditions are available in KPPP Portal More Information available at APMC RAMDURG office during Working hours and https://kppp.karnataka.gov.in website

Sd/- (Shivanand. G. Math) SECRETARY APMC Ramdurg
Sd/-(Prakash.B.Holeppagol) ADMINISTRATOR APMC Ramdurg

BENGALURU SOLID WASTE MANAGEMENT LIMITED

Office of the Deputy General Manager-1, BSWML, 1st Floor, BBMP Building, Thimmaiah Road, Vasanth Nagar, Bengaluru – 560 052

No:DGM-1/BSWML/TEND/30/2025-26 — Date:16.03.2026

SHORT TERM TENDER NOTIFICATION
(Through GOK KPP Portal Only) Call-02

The Deputy General Manager-1, Bengaluru Solid Waste Management Limited on behalf of the Managing Director, BSWML, Bengaluru invites bids from eligible bidders for the works. The details of the tender is as below.

Pkg. No.	Name of the works	Approx. Amount put to tender (Rs. in lakhs) Excluding GST	EMD (Amount in Rs.)	Time of Completion
P1	**Social Media Activities under SBM 2.0 With the following activities-Call-02.** a) Dissemination through Reputed Radio during the large events and Swachh Survekshan under Social Media Activities of SBMU 2.0 b) Social Media Campaign for activities under Mid Media Component under Social Media Activities of SBMU 2.0 c) Digital Awareness Drive under Social Media Activities of SBMU 2.0	408.26	**Rs.1,00,000/-** through e-payment under of the following i.e., online / RTGS / NEFT / OTC and the balance **Rs.5,13,000/-** by Bank Guarantee / FDR issued by Nationalized/ Scheduled Bank	3 Years
P2	**Mid Media Activities under SBM 2.0 With the following activities-Call-02.** a) Large Scale Events including clubbed with workshops, marathon, plogging, signature campaigns-Large scale events including clubbed with workshops, marathon, plogging, signature campaigns under Mid Media Activities SBMU 2.0 b) Ministry based programmes under SBM 2.0 - Programmes and events created by MoHUA which includes – world toilet day, swachhta pakhwada, Indian swachhta league, 3R Promotion, swachh Diwali, swachhta hi seva et., under Mid Media Activities SBMU 2.0	588.47	**Rs.1,00,000/-** through e-payment under of the following i.e., online / RTGS / NEFT / OTC and the balance **Rs.7,83,000/-** by Bank Guarantee / FDR issued by Nationalized/ Scheduled Bank	2 Years

Calendar of Events: 1) Last Date for Uploading Pre bid Queries: 19.03.2026 at 17:30 hrs. 2) Tender Pre Bid meeting: 20.03.2026 at 15:00 hrs at above mentioned office. 3) Last Date for Receipt of Tender: 25.03.2026 before 16:00 hrs. 4) Opening of Technical Bid: 26.03.2026 after 16:30 hrs.

More details can be downloaded from website - **https://kppp.karnataka.gov.in**

Sd/-
Deputy General Manager-1, BSWML, Bengaluru

DIPR/CP/6296/CCL/2025-26

BENGALURU SOUTH CITY CORPORATION

Office of the Executive Engineer, Jayanagara Division, No.44, 18th Main road, 39th Cross, Jayanagar 4th T block, Bengaluru-560041

No: EE/BSCC/JN/TEND/04/2025-26 — **Date: 13-03-2026**

SHORT TERM TENDER NOTIFICATION
(Two Cover System)

(Through **GOK** KPP Portal **https://kppp.karnataka.gov.in** only)

The Executive Engineer, Jayanagara Division, BSCC, invites tenders on behalf the Commissioner, BSCC, Bengaluru from eligible contractors registered in Greater Bengaluru Authority (Bengaluru South City Corporation) Or equivalent registration with KPWD/CPWD/Railways/MES or any State Government Organizations for the construction of works detailed in the table below.

Sl No.	Name of the work
1.	Improvements to footpath, roads and drain in corporation colony 29th A main, 29th main, 28th B main, 28th A main and 28th main, 41st cross Marenahalli Ring road and surrounding areas in Block No.52_2, 22_1, 22_2, 52_1, 23_1, 58_2, 23_2, 57_1, 50_ 2 and 18 in Ward No.184 Jayanagara East Ward **Estimate Cost: ₹. 300.00 Lakhs, EMD: ₹. 4,50,000/-**
2.	Comprehensive development of roads, drains and other developmental works JP Nagara 1st Phase 2nd Phase and Surrounding area in Ward No. 187 Sarakki Ward. **Estimate Cost: ₹. 290.00 Lakhs, EMD: ₹. 4,35,000/-**

Calendar of Events : (1) Tender must be submitted online through KPP portal on or before **26-03-2026, 4:00** pm. (2) Pre-Bid Meeting will be held on office of the Chief Engineer, Jayanagar Zone (Zone-1), Bengaluru South City Corportion, 9th Main, 9th Cross, Jayanagar 2nd Block, Bengaluru-560011 on **20-03-2026** at **03:00** pm. (3) Technical Bids will be Opened on **27-03-2026** by **4:05** pm. (4) Financial bids will be Opened on **30-03-2026** by **4:05** pm.

Sd/-
Executive Engineer, Jayanagara Division
Bengaluru South City Corporation

BANGALORE WATER SUPPLY AND SEWERAGE BOARD

INVITATION FOR TENDER
(Only Through KPP Portal)

BWSSB invites Tenders in Two Stage Tender System from Registered Contractors for the following works.

Office of the Chief Engineer (Design & QA), 9th Floor, Cauvery Bhavan, K.G. Road, Bengaluru - 560009

Sl No.	Name of the Works	Amount put to Tender / EMD Amount
IFT No:BWSSB/CE(D&QA)/ACE/TA/6388/2025-26		**Date: 16-03-2026**
1.	Tender for the Upgradation of ArcGIS Software Products at BWSSB.	₹ 391.46 Lakhs / ₹ 5,87,200/-

For the above Work,The last date and time for Receipt of tenders **:25-03-2026** upto **16:00** hrs. The Technical bids will be Opened on **26-03-2026** at **16:00** hrs.

Sd/- Chief Engineer (Design & QA)

Office of the Chief Engineer (UWP), 5th Floor, Cauvery Bhavan, K.G. Road, Bengaluru - 560009

IFT No:BWSSB/CE(UWP)/DCE(WWM-E&W)/TA-1/1077/2025-26		**Date: 16-03-2026**
2.	Tender for the work of Design, Construction, Commissioning of 75 MLD STP based on SBR with BNR with tertiary Treatment and power generation & odour control units at Madiwala including Operation and Maintenance 7 years. (Turnkey contract) Call-2.	₹ 188.09 Crore / ₹ 1.88 Crore

For the above Work, The last date and time for Receipt of tenders **:02-04-2026** upto **17:30** hrs. The Technical bids will be Opened on **04-04-2026** at **12:00** hrs.

Sd/- Chief Engineer (UWP)

The details regarding the tender and participation in the e-procurement portal process can be obtained by logging on to **https://kppp.karnataka.gov.in** For further details contact the above signed office during working hours.

DIPR/SI/6295/2025-26

Thousands rally for Ladakh statehood, 6th Schedule listing

Announce Next Round Of Talks: Leh Apex Body

Naseer.Ganai
@timesofindia.com

Srinagar: Thousands rallied on Monday in Leh and Kargil on calls by Leh Apex Body (LAB) and Kargil Democratic Alliance (KDA) to press for statehood and Sixth Schedule status for the Union territory (UT) of Ladakh.

The rallies came two days after the Centre revoked National Security Act (NSA) against climate activist and LAB member Sonam Wangchuk to release him from jail after almost six months.

He had been detained since Sept last year over violence during protests over the two demands.

Sonam Wangchuk, with his wife Gitanjali J Angmo, after his release from Jodhpur Central Jail

Speaking on Monday, LAB convenor Gelek Phunchok described the rallies as the first massive gatherings since last Sept's protests when four persons died and over 80 were injured in alleged police firing.

Monday's rallyists carried portraits of the four killed in the alleged firing alongside placards that read "Ladakh demands statehood and Sixth Schedule", "No more delays, statehood now," and "Protect Ladakh culture".

Addressing the rally in Leh's Polo Ground, LAB co-chairman Chering Dorjay Lakrook said Wangchuk's release had vindicated their stand. He accused previous LG Kavinder Gupta of branding Wangchuk and the people of Ladakh "anti-national," saying "we have proved him wrong."

Lakrook urged the Union home ministry (MHA) to announce the next round of talks with Ladakhi representatives, saying further delays were not acceptable. A high-powered MHA panel led by junior home minister Nityanand Rai has been speaking with Ladakh's representatives on their demands.

T'gana govt stops payments to farmers for growing ganja

Nirupa.Vatyam
@timesofindia.com

Hyderabad: On March 22, when the first instalment of Rythu Bharosa is released across Telangana, names of 57 farmers from Adilabad will be missing from the list of beneficiaries. The state govt issued a 'stop payment' order after the farmers were caught cultivating ganja on agricultural land for which they were receiving assistance under the scheme.

Adilabad SP Akhil Mahajan told TOI that police officers have written to the govt over the past six months seeking cancellation of Rythu Bharosa benefits for 90 farmers who were growing ganja alongside pulses or other crops.

The scheme provides Rs 12,000 per acre annually as financial assistance to farmers to meet their initial investment needs ahead of crop sowing season. For the ongoing rabi season, the govt announced that around Rs 9,000 crore will be credited to the accounts of nearly 70 lakh farmers in a phased manner. Earlier, for the kharif season, the Rythu Bharosa assistance was disbursed in June 2025.

Acting on tip-offs, Adilabad police recovered more than 3,500 ganja plants across the district over the past six months. "Another 30 cancellation requests were sent about two weeks ago. Payments to those farmers are also expected to be stopped soon," said Mahajan. Police officials said these farmers typically own four to five acres of land and use other crops as cover while cultivating ganja in between. The cultivation was found on patta land, land recorded under the Record of Rights (ROR), land recognised under the Recognition of Forest Rights (ROFR), and even on leased land.

Acting on tip-offs, Adilabad police recovered more than 3,500 ganja plants across the district over the past six months

"Mostly, urad dal, jowar and cotton crops are grown as cover, as they grow tall and can conceal the weed plants," Mahajan said, adding that ganja is cultivated for sale within the district and outside to earn easy money.

Police officials also said that they feared ganja cultivation was on the rise in the district. Cases have been registered against the offenders under Narcotic Drugs and Psychotropic Substances Act (NDPS), 1985 and they have been sent to judicial custody.

"However, the offenders often resume cultivation after coming out of jail. That's why we felt cancellation of Rythu Bharosa benefits would act as a stronger deterrent," said the 2017-batch IPS officer.

Religious freedom in India takes backseat: Report

▶ Continued from page 1

The report said in 2025, religious freedom conditions in India continued to deteriorate as govt introduced and enforced new legislation targeting religious minority communities and their houses of worship.

"For several years now, USCIRF had persisted in presenting a distorted and selective picture of India, relying on questionable sources and ideological narratives rather than objective facts. Such repeated misrepresentations only undermine the credibility of the commission itself," said MEA spokesperson Randhir Jaiswal.

USCIRF is an independent, bipartisan US federal govt agency. It makes policy recommendations to the US president, secretary of state, and Congress.

Thousands of tourists spend freezing night in Atal tunnel

Rohit Mullick & Sanjay Khajuria | TNN

Kullu/Jammu: Thousands of tourists were stranded in Atal Tunnel and nearby areas of Himachal's Lahaul Spiti due to heavy snowfall since Sunday evening, prompting a rescue by police and Border Roads Organisation (BRO). At Kishtwar in neighbouring J&K, the Army rescued 235 civilians from a mountain pass after heavy snowfall and severe weather conditions blocked paths.

Over 1,000 vehicles were stuck in Atal Tunnel on Sunday evening. More than 2 feet of snow accumulated in the area around the tunnel. As the highway to Manali got blocked, thousands spent the night shivering inside their vehicles. Some were stuck for almost 20 hours. "We guided 700 of the over 1,000 stranded vehicles from Atal Tunnel to Manali on Sunday night. The remaining were back by Monday afternoon," Manali DSP KD Sharma, part of the rescue team, said. On Monday, Kullu Police closed Manali-Atal Tunnel highway due to snowfall.

PTI

With 2 feet of snow accumulating in the area, over 1,000 vehicles were stuck in Atal Tunnel

Police in Lahaul Spiti issued an advisory to avoid unnecessary travel. Manali's minimum temperature was 2.9 degrees. A yellow alert has been issued for light rain and snow in Himachal on March 17 and 18, and an orange alert for heavy rain and snow on March 19.

In Kishtwar, the rescue was centered on Sinthan Top, a mountain pass and a popular tourist spot.

Survey: Urban unemployment at 3-month low

New Delhi: Unemployment rate in urban areas fell to a three-month low of 6.6% in Feb from 7% in the preceding month, signaling a recovery in the labour market in cities, while the rural joblessness rate remained unchanged at 4.2% during the month, the latest periodic labour force survey monthly bulletin released by National Statistics Office Monday showed. The overall unemployment rate slowed marginally to 4.9% in Feb from 5% in the previous month.

Women recorded the most significant improvement in employment indicators as the female unemployment rate dropped to 5.1% in Feb from 5.6% in Jan as the urban female unemployment rate slowed to 8.7% from 9.8% and the rural female joblessness rate eased to 4% from 4.3% during the corresponding period. TNN

Isro unveils four geospatial applications on Bhuvan portal

Bengaluru: Isro said Monday its National Remote Sensing Centre (NRSC) has unveiled four new geospatial applications on Bhuvan Geoportal during User Interaction Meet (UIM) 2026 held recently.

The applications released by Isro chairman V Narayanan were developed with IIT-Hyderabad and NRSC. They include HYDRAA-Raksha, a platform for Hyderabad Disaster Response and Asset Protection Agency to monitor govt assets, public spaces and encroachments; Kasturi, a spatial knowledge base for archaeology and heritage mapping; Bharat Darshan, a virtual geospatial tour of Unesco heritage sites; and Digipin-Bhuvan, a tool for visualising Digital Postal Index Number initiative of Department of Posts. The annual UIM, organised by NRSC along with NewSpace India Limited, focused on "Earth Observation Systems for Viksit Bharat – Trends and Challenges". The event saw attendance from the geospatial user community on access to data products, applications, analytics tools and upcoming earth observation missions.

More than 400 participants, including nearly 60 industry representatives, attended the programme that featured six technical sessions and an exhibition showcasing advances in geospatial data processing and applications. TNN

RAJIV GANDHI HOUSING CORPORATION LIMITED
9rd floor, E & F Block, Cauvery Bhavan, Bengaluru-560009
Tele-:080-23118888, Website: https://ashraya.karnataka.gov.in
e-mail: rgrhclgmtech@gmail.com

Dated: 16.03.2026

SHORT TERM TENDER NOTIFICATION (Through KPPP portal)

Rajiv Gandhi Housing Corporation Limited invites Short Term tenders for the following work through KPPP Portal from the eligible contractors.

Last date of submission of bid is Date: 01.04.2026

Name of work :-

Sl. No	Place	Amount put to tender [Excluding GST] (Rs. in Lakhs)	EMD Rs. (in Lakhs)
1	Construction Of Women's College Building For Waqf Board 08 No's (G+1) In Different Taluks Of Bangalore Urban, Bangalore Rural, Chikkaballapur, Chitradurga, Kolar, Tumkur And Ramanagar Districts (Fixed Price No Variation) Package – 2. **Indent No: RGRHCL/2025-26/BD/WORK_INDENT57**	3210.74	32.10
2	Construction of Moulana Azad Model School / College (G+2 truss and galvanized and poly carbonate sheet roofing works at second floor) in Kalaburgi District – 2 No's (Afzalpur-1, Kalaburgi-1) Package - 16 (Fixed Price No Variation). **Indent No: RGRHCL/2025-26/BD/WORK_INDENT35/CALL-2**	827.52	8.27
3	Construction of Moulana Azad Model School / College (G+2 truss and galvanized and poly carbonate sheet roofing works at second floor) in Malluru Place, Mangalore Taluk, Dakshina Kannada District Package - 21 (Fixed Price No Variation), **Indent No: RGRHCL/2025-26/BD/WORK_INDENT40/CALL-2**	441.16	4.41

Further information visit : https://kppp.karnataka.gov.in, https://ashraya.karnataka.gov.in

DIPR/CP/SHIRDI SAI/6302/2025-26

Sd/-
General Manager (S D)

Karnataka Building and Other Construction Workers Welfare Board
Kalyana Suraksha Bhavana, ITI Compound, Dairy Circle, Bannerghatta Road, Bengaluru-560 029, Karnataka
Phone: 080-29753354/56, Email: karbuildworkerswelfare@gmail.com

No: KBOCWWB/NOTIFICATION/2025-26 Date: 16.03.2026

E-TENDER NOTIFICATION

Below mentioned Tenders (Two bid system - Technical and Financial bids) are hereby invited by Karnataka Building and other Construction Workers Welfare Board from interested Agencies as per Terms and conditions described in the Bid documents for the below mentioned tenders.

Sl. No.	Name of the Tender	Approx. Value of Tender (Rs. in Lakhs)	EMD (Rs. in Lakhs)
1	Construction of Transit Accommodation in Sy No. 15 at Ghodampalli Village, Bidar Taluk, Bidar District.	714.51	10.72
2	Providing and Supplying Kitchen equipment and Furniture to Karmika Samudaya Bhavan in Ballari district.	51.77	1.04
3	Project Management Consultant Services for the Work of Package (A-3) Under Bengaluru Division Cluster - Construction Of "Shramik Residential Schools" (4 Nos.) (From 6th Std To 12th Std) at 1. Kg Halli Village, Malur Taluk, Kolar District, 2. Masanihalli Village, Hosadurga Taluk, Chitradurga District, 3. Sonnenahalli Village, Koratagere Taluk, Tumkur District & 4. Kogganuru Village, Davanagere Taluk, Davanagere District.	150.58	2.26
4	Project Management Consultant Services for the Work of A) Package (C-3) Under Kalaburgi Division Cluster - Construction Of "Shramik Residential Schools" (2 Nos.) (From 6th Std To 12th Std) at 1. Yaradona Village, Karatagi Taluk, Koppal District & 2. Siraguppa Village, Siraguppa Taluk, Ballari District And B) Construction Of Transit Accommodation In Sy No. 15/ */* At Ghodampalli Village, Bidar Taluk, Bidar District.	89.60	1.79
5	Project Management Consultant Services for the Work of Package (D-3) Under Belagavi Division Cluster - Construction Of "Shramik Residential Schools" (5 Nos.) (From 6th Std To 12th Std) at 1. Athani Village, Athani Taluk, Belagavi District, 2. Udakeri Village, Bailahongala Taluk, Belagavi District, 3. Katakol Village, Ramadurga Taluk, Belagavi District, 4. Dandeli Village, Dandeli Taluk, Uttara Kannada District & 5. Ramewadi Village, Hukkeri Taluk, Belagavi District.	192.42	2.89

Tenders shall be submitted electronically through K.P.P.Portal (**www.kppp.karnataka.gov.in**) of the Government of Karnataka. Last date of submission of above-mentioned tenders are as per K.P.P.Portal. For further details and information can be obtained from the Joint Secretary, KBOCWWB during office hours.

DIPR/CP/JA/6300/2025-26

Sd/-
Joint Secretary, KB&OCWWB

BENGALURU SOLID WASTE MANAGEMENT LIMITED
Office of the Deputy General Manager-3, 1st Floor, BBMP Building, Thimmaiah Road, Vasanth Nagar, Bengaluru-560052.

No.No.DGM-3/BSWML/TEND/26/2025-26 Date:16.03.2026

INVITATION FOR SHORT TERM TENDER (IFT)

(Only through GOK KPP Portal Only)

The Deputy General Manager-3, BSWML on behalf of the Managing Director, BSWML, Bengaluru invites the tender from eligible bidders for the works detailed in the table below. The Tender documents can be downloaded from the Karnataka Public Procurement Portal Website (https://kppp.karnataka.gov.in) on payment of prescribed fee noted against each item of work (non-refundable) in the form of e-Payment through Karnataka Public Procurement Portal. The Bidder shall submit the bid through Karnataka Public Procurement Portal. Other details may be seen in the bid document.

Sl. No.	Name of the work	Amount put to tender Rs.in lakhs (Excluding GST)	EMD (in Rupees)	Stipulated Period of Contract
1	Bio-Enzyme based Odour Suppression and Basic infrastructure development works around MSGP processing plants in Doddaballapura Constituency	800.21	8,00,211.00	11 Months

Calendar of Events : (1) Last date to upload pre-bid queries : **20.03.2026 upto 15.00 Hrs.** in KPP Portal (2) Pre bid meeting : **23.03.2026 at 15.00 Hrs** at the office of CE & CGM-2 (Tech), BSWML, Thimmaiah Road, Vasanthanagar, Bangalore (3) Last date for submission of the bids : **06.04.2026 upto 16.00 Hrs** (4) Date of opening of Technical bids on : **07.04.2026 at 16.30 Hrs** (5) Date of opening of Financial bids will be notified to technically qualified bidders.

DIPR/CP/SHIRDI SAI/6301/2025-26

Sd/-
Deputy General Manager-3
BSWML, Bengaluru.

Govt. of India
NATIONAL HIGHWAYS AUTHORITY OF INDIA
(Ministry of Road Transport and Highways)

रजिस्ट्री सं. डी.एल. 33004/99 REGD. NO. D.L.-33004/99

भारत का राजपत्र
The Gazette of India

सी.जी. - डी.एल. - अ. - 25022026-270451
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असाधारण
EXTRAORDINARY
भाग II - खण्ड-3 - उप-खण्ड-(ii)
PART II—Section 3—Sub-section (ii)
प्राधिकार से प्रकाशित
PUBLISHED BY AUTHORITY

सं. 936] नई दिल्ली, मंगलवार, फरवरी 24, 2026/फाल्गुन 5, 1947
No. 936] NEW DELHI, TUESDAY, FEBRUARY 24, 2026/PHALGUNA 5, 1947

MINISTRY OF ROAD TRANSPORT AND HIGHWAYS

NOTIFICATION

New Delhi, the 24th February, 2026

S.O. 980(E).- Whereas by the notification of the Government of India in the Ministry of Road Transport and Highways, Notification no. S.O.5266(E), Dated:18th November 2025, published in the Gazette of India, Extraordinary, Part II, Section 3, Sub-section (ii) issued under sub-section (1) of section 3A of the National Highway Act, 1956 (48 of 1956) (hereinafter referred to as the said Act), the Central Government declared its intension to acquire the land specified in the Schedule annexed to the said notification for building (widening/four-laning, etc.), maintenance, management and operation of NH7 in the stretch of land from Km. 524.72 to Km. 556.84 in the district of Bangalore Urban in the state of KARNATAKA

And whereas the substance of the said notification has been published in Newspapers "The Times of India" dated 04/12/2025 and "Samyukta Karnataka" dated 04/12/2025 ; under sub-section (3) of section 3A of the said Act;

And whereas the Competent Authority has not received any objections filed under Section 3-C

And whereas, in pursuance of sub-section (1) of section 3D of the said Act, the competent authority has submitted its report to the Central Government;

Now, therefore, upon receipt of the said report of the competent authority and in exercise of the powers conferred by the sub-section (1) of section 3D of the said Act, the Central Government hereby declares that the land specified in the said Schedule should be acquired for the aforesaid purpose;

And further, in pursuance of sub-section (2) of section 3D of the said Act, the Central Government hereby declares that on publication of this notification in the Official Gazette, the land specified in the said Schedule shall vest absolutely in the Central Government, free from all encumbrances.

SCHEDULE

Brief description of the land to be acquired, with or without structure, falling within the NH-44 (old No. 7) in the stretch of land from Km. 524.72 to Km. 556.84 in the district of Bangalore Urban in the state of KARNATAKA

[F. No. NHAI/Tech/NS-2/LA/KNT-2/2008/3D]
SHAIKH AMINKHAN, Director

District: Bengaluru
https://egazette.gov.in
Publication date:24.02.2026
https://morth.gov.in/
https://bhoomirashi.gov.in/

Scan for notification in English and Hindi

Scan for Notification in Kannada (as Translated from English Notification)

4001/71/2526
ODISHA HYDRO POWER CORPORATION LTD.
(A GOVT. OF ODISHA UNDERTAKING)
CIN: U40101OR1995SGC003963
REGD.OFFICE: OHPC Corporate Office, Bhoi Nagar, Janpath, Bhubaneswar-751022
Phone: 91-0674-2542983, 2542802, 2545526, Fax- 2542102 E-mail: ohpc.co@gmail.com

No. OHPC: OHPC: TECH: C&P:/ 60/25-26/ 1880 Date: 02.03.2026

NOTICE INVITING TENDER No.10/ 25-26

Sealed Tenders are invited in two part i.e. (i) Techno Commercial bid & (ii) Price bid in separate sealed envelopes from consultants empaneled in the vendor list of Odisha Space Application Centre (ORSAC) to undertake DGPS / ETS survey having valid GST registration Certificate & IT PAN, and fulfilling the other eligibility criteria as per the terms and conditions for the work mentioned in the tender specifications:

Description of Services	Cost of tender papers in Rs.	EMD In shape of DD/ BG only (Refundable) in Rs.
"Engagement of consultant for demarcation, preparation of land schedule, DGPS Survey and to obtain Forest Clearance under Forest (Conservation) Act 1980 for construction of Balimela Pumped Storage Project in the District Malkangiri, Odisha."	11,800/- (10,000 + GST @ 18%)	2,08,000/-

For details of the tender documents, terms & conditions please visit/ refer our website **www.ohpcltd.com** from Dt.20.03.2026.

C & P Head
OIPR-4001/4088/1/25-26/0006

KARNATAKA ELECTRICITY REGULATORY COMMISSION
No. 16 C-1, Millers Tank Bed Area, Vasanthanagara, Bengaluru-560052. Phone: 080-22268677/78/79 Fax: 080-22268667
Email: kerc-ka@nic.in Website: https://kerc.karnataka.gov.in

No: KERC/WS(DSM)/2025-26/1730 Date: 11.03.2026

PUBLIC HEARING NOTICE

Sub: Draft Karnataka Electricity Regulatory Commission (Forecasting, Scheduling, Deviation Settlement Mechanism and related matters for Sellers and Buyers of Wind, Solar and RE-Hybrid Generation sources) Regulations, 2025.

Ref: KERC/WS(DSM)/2025-26/1299, dated: 10.12.2025.

The draft Regulations on the above subject was published in the Official Gazette of Karnataka on 16.12.2025 and the same is also made available on the KERC's Website **https://kerc.karnataka.gov.in**

The Commission has scheduled a public hearing in the matter on **07.04.2026 at 3.30 pm in the Court Hall of the Commission.** Interested Persons may appear in person before the Commission and may make oral submissions thereon.

Sd/- Secretary
For Karnataka Electricity Regulatory Commission

DIPR/CP/YC/6280/2025-26

Department of AYUSH
Dhavanthri Road, Bangalore-560 009.
Phone: 080-22877484, 22876553
e-mail: directorayush@gmail.com

No: AYUSH/42/NAM/2026-NAM-DIRECTORATE OF AYUSH Date: 06-03-2026

NOTIFICATION

The Karnataka State Ayush Society invites eligible and interested candidates to attend a Walk-in Interview for the vacant post of Account Assistant under the Ayushman Bharat Scheme of National Ayush Mission. The post is purely temporary and **on an honorarium basis.** For detailed information regarding eligibility criteria, qualifications, and terms of engagement, candidates are advised to visit the official website: **https://ayush.karnataka.gov.in.**

The Walk-in Interview is scheduled to be held on **25-03-2026 at 11:00 a.m.** in the Meeting Hall, 1st Floor, Directorate of Ayush, Dhanvanthri Road, Bengaluru - 560009.

Details of the post and terms & conditions as well as period of engagement, eligibility, experience etc., are as under: -

Designation: Account Assistant, **No. of Post:** 01.

Education Qualification: B.Com/BBA/BBM.

Experience: 2 years of experience in relevant field. Candidates should have proficiency in Tally prime, MS Office and Kannada and English typing.

Age Limit : 45, Monthly Honorarium: Rs. 25,000/-.

Sd/- Commissioner
Ayush Department, Bengaluru.

DIPR/CP/R6277/AAPL/2025-26

Your phone is rewiring your brain.

IT'S TIME TO TAKE CONTROL

Dr Baby Chakrapani P S

From scrolling addiction to memory problems, science reveals what over four hours of daily screen time does to your brain and what you can do about it.

Think you're just bad at focusing? Blame your brain's built-in superpower — and your smartphone.

Your brain isn't a computer with fixed programming. It's more like Play-Doh — constantly being reshaped by everything you do. Scientists call this neuroplasticity, and it's how you learn to ride a bike, speak a new language, or remember your best friend's birthday.

But here's the catch: every swipe, click, and scroll is also a training session for your brain. And with people globally spending over four hours a day on their phones, we're running a massive, uncontrolled experiment on our own minds.

The results? Not pretty.

When 'Just One More Video' Becomes A Brain Problem

For some, the internet has stopped being a tool and has become a trap. Digital addiction, officially called Internet Addiction, is now recognised as a real behavioural condition affecting over 7% worldwide. Teens are especially vulnerable.

This isn't about weak willpower or being 'too attached to your phone.' It's science. Your brain is doing exactly what it's designed to do — learn from repetition. The problem? Compulsive scrolling is teaching it all the wrong lessons.

Think of it this way: practising piano strengthens the pathways for music. Compulsive phone use strengthens pathways for craving more screen time — while weakening the circuits for self-control and deep focus.

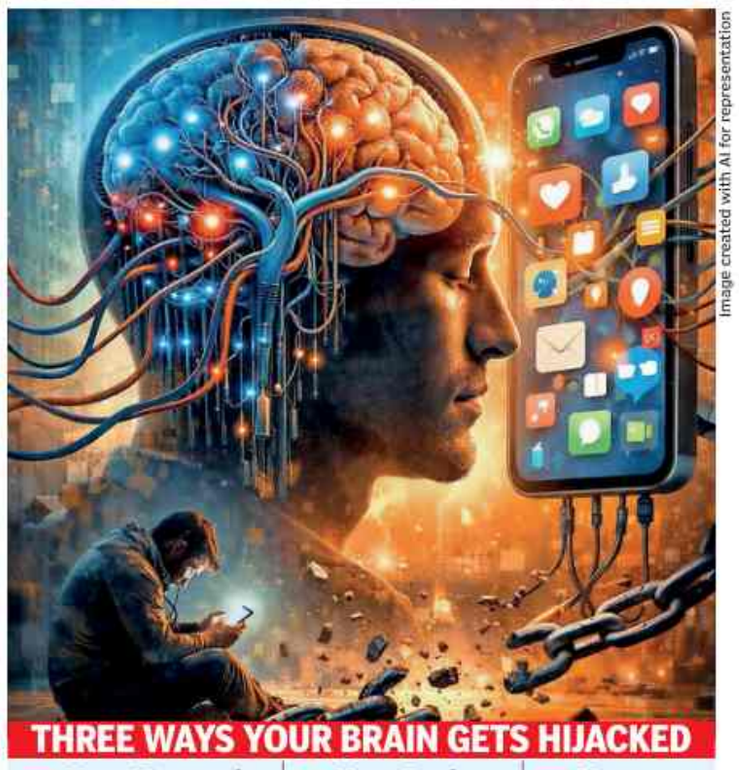


Image created with AI for representation

THREE WAYS YOUR BRAIN GETS HIJACKED

1 Your 'Reward Button' Goes Into Overdrive

Your brain has a reward system that releases dopamine, the 'feel-good' chemical, when you experience pleasure. Every notification 'ping,' every new like, and every video recommendation gives this system a little jolt.

Over time, your brain gets trained to crave these digital hits. Real-world pleasures — a good conversation, finishing a book— start feeling less satisfying. You need more screen time just to feel normal. That's not a weakness. That's your reward system getting rewired.

2 Your Brain 'Manager' Gets Weaker

The prefrontal cortex — the front part of your brain — is like your internal manager. It handles focus, impulse control, and decision-making. Digital addiction weakens this manager, leading to:

- Reflexive phone-checking you can't control, even during important moments
- Scattered attention from constantly jumping between apps
- Memory problems because you use the internet instead of remembering

3 Your Decision-Making Gets Hijacked

Good decisions need balance: immediate pleasure vs long-term goals. In digital addiction, this balance breaks. The loud 'reward button' drowns out your quiet 'manager.' Result? You choose the notification buzz over sleep, the Instagram scroll over the project deadline — then regret it later.

The Blue Light Bombshell

It's not just the scrolling that's the problem. New research shows that chronic exposure to blue light from screens can physically damage your brain. In lab studies, prolonged blue light exposure led to a troubling trio: increased anxiety, impaired memory, and actual structural changes to the hippocampus —the brain region crucial for learning and memory.

This isn't just about disrupted sleep any more — your screen is reshaping your brain's architecture, the very foundation of how you think and feel.

BOTTOM LINE
Your Brain, Your Choice

The most hopeful finding in all this research? Your brain can change.

This isn't about quitting the internet—it's about building a brain that uses technology by choice, not compulsion.

You're not powerless. Your brain is waiting for you to guide it towards healthier patterns.

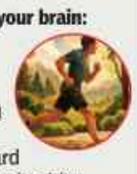
While individual effort matters, this challenge also requires collective action. Organisations like the Centre of Excellence in Neurodegeneration and Brain Health (CENABH) at Cochin University of Science and Technology, Kerala, are pioneering solutions through their mission of creating 'healthy brains for a healthy society.' Through research, community outreach programmes, and collaborations with start-ups and educational institutions, they're building support networks that tackle digital addiction from multiple angles—helping individuals, families, and organisations develop healthier tech relationships grounded in cutting-edge brain science.

Start With The Basics

Practise digital hygiene: Try an hour of 'phone-free morning' or turn off social media notifications

Gradual detox: Slowly cut back on high-stimulation apps—no need for cold turkey

Talk it through: Cognitive Behavioural Therapy helps identify triggers and build healthier responses



Move your body, heal your brain: Exercise isn't just for fitness — it's brain medicine. It naturally boosts mood-boosting chemicals and focus, recalibrates your reward system, and gives you a healthy sense of achievement that can compete with the screen's high. A regular walk or workout can be transformative.

High-Tech Help For A High-Tech Problem

Cutting-edge therapies are showing promise:

VR therapy: Practise resisting digital temptations in safe, virtual environments

Neurofeedback: Like a real-time mirror for your brain, helping you strengthen focus circuits

Magnetic stimulation: Non-invasive magnetic pulses can boost underactive areas responsible for impulse control

Your 4-Week Brain Reset Plan

Week 1-2: Just Notice

Don't change anything yet. Just observe. Check your screen time report. Notice what you're feeling (bored? stressed? lonely?) when you reach for your phone. Awareness is the first step.

Week 3-4: Make One Swap

Pick one small change:

- Try a phone-free first hour after waking up
- When you get the urge to scroll, do something else for 3 minutes — deep breathing, stretching, or getting water
- Charge phone in another room at night

Beyond Week 4: Build It In

Get moving: 30-minute walks a few times weekly

Practise pausing: Try short daily mindfulness to build impulse control

Get support: If you're stuck, therapists trained in CBT can help

Consider advanced help: Neurofeedback or VR therapy if challenges persist

Your move: Which small change will you make today?

The author is director (incharge), Centre of Excellence in Neurodegeneration and Brain Health (CENABH) and director, Centre for Neuroscience, CUSAT

Sindoor remarks: Hry govt drops case against prof

Be Prudent In Future, SC Tells Ashoka Univ Prof

TIMES NEWS NETWORK

Approving Haryana govt's 'one-time magnanimity' offer, SC advised Ali Khan Mahmudabad be careful and said 'sometimes reading between the lines conveys a very different message and causes problem'

New Delhi: Haryana govt Monday informed Supreme Court it has, as "one-time magnanimity", decided to drop the case against Ashoka University professor **Ali Khan Mahmudabad** for making objectionable remarks against 'Operation Sindoor'.

Appearing for Haryana, additional solicitor general S V Raju told a bench of CJI Surya Kant and Justice Joymalya Bagchi that the Haryana govt has refused sanction for Mahmudabad's prosecution, which would mean the case is closed even though the state police had filed a chargesheet against him. But, he said SC should warn him against making such statements in future.

The court approved the "one-time magnanimity" offer and asked the professor, who was arrested in May last year, to be careful about what he says. "Sometimes reading between the lines conveys a very different message and causes problem", and the professor should desist from such statements, SC said.

Approving the closure of the case against Mahmudabad, pending before judicial magistrate first class at Sonepat, SC said, "We have no reason to doubt that the petitioner, a highly educated person, will be cautious and act in a prudent manner in the future." Appearing for Mahmudabad, senior advocate Sidharth Luthra and counsel Mohd Nizam Pasha said he understood the message given by SC.

On May 21, SC granted him interim bail but constituted an SIT of IPS officers to probe into the bona fides of his allegedly objectionable statement made during 'Operation Sindoor'. It had also barred him from making any statement on the operation by the Indian armed forces against Pakistan.

Puri's daughter moves Delhi HC against posts linking to Epstein

New Delhi: Himayani Puri, daughter of Union minister **Hardeep Singh Puri**, has approached Delhi high court seeking removal of what she calls "false" and "defamatory" social media content linking her to convicted American sex offender Jeffrey Epstein. The court is likely to hear the case later this week.

Himayani has sought Rs 10 crore in damages and an order restraining several individuals and platforms from disseminating the material. She has sought an unconditional apology and a full retraction from the defendants.

Himayani described herself as an accomplished finance and investment professional and argued that she is being targeted "in a coordinated and motivated manner with the clear intention of maligning and discrediting her, both in India and on a global scale". She said she was targeted because she is the minister's daughter. The allegations, the petition said, were "baseless imputations" that Himayani Puri maintained direct or indirect business, financial or personal network links with Epstein, malicious and without factual foundation. TNN

3,500 PILs pending in SC, the oldest for 42 yrs: Law ministry

TIMES NEWS NETWORK

New Delhi: Supreme Court, primarily responsible for constitutional interpretation and matters of urgent criminal appeals, is burdened with more than 3,500 public interest litigations (PILs), 698 of them pending for over 10 years. The oldest one has not been adjudicated for 42 years. Most of these PILs are related to environmental, land laws and agricultural tenancy matters, according to information shared by the law ministry.

The highest number of 570 PILs were admitted by the constitutional court in 2025, further clogging SC's docket of over 80,000 cases. In the past five years, SC has managed to dispose of 1,872 PILs, but not enough to clear the backlog. In response to a Parliament question, law minister **Arjun Ram Meghwal** told Lok Sabha last week that total PILs before SC as on March 10 are 3,525. The average time taken for disposal of PILs is not known.

Meghwal said the highest number of pending PILs filed since 2014, include 570 filed in 2025, followed by 347 filed in 2019, about 306 in 2020 and 293 in 2026 among others. The oldest PIL pending in the SC for adjudication was filed in 1984, two others pending since 1985 — all three are M C Mehta Vs Union of India, two related to environmental laws and one of housing and building municipal laws.

Two PILs of contempt of court related subject — Mohd Hashim (dead) in Iqbal Ansar Vs Sri Kalyan Singh, and Aslam @Bhure Vs S B Chowhan — are pending since 1995 and 1996, respectively.

People who have filed many of these PILs are deceased while their matters are still pending adjudication. The PIL applicants include Archaeological Society of India, Range Forest Officer of Bilagi, Bagalkot district in Karnataka; Bihar Police Association; Subramanian Swamy Vs Union of India; Madhya Pradesh Vs Medha Patkar; pharmaceuticals company, builders and hoteliers.

Plea for new HC bench in Carbide case nixed

Dhananjay.Mahapatra @timesofindia.com

New Delhi: Supreme Court Monday rejected an NGO's plea for change of bench in Madhya Pradesh HC which stayed an earlier direction for identification of a site away from habitation for safe storage of incinerated residue of toxic waste from Union Carbide factory in Bhopal, a poisonous gas leak that killed thousands in 1984.

A bench of CJI Surya Kant and Justice Joymalya Bagchi also rejected the plea of senior advocate Anand Grover, who appeared for 'Bhopal Gas Peedith Sangharsh Sahyog Samiti', seeking opening of the concrete box in which the ash and incinerated residue of the toxic waste is stored to test the veracity of an expert's opinion that it contained high mercury content, which if leaked could contaminate groundwater at Pithampur, the place where it was incinerated.

Citing the views of Asif Qureshi, a professor in IIT-Hyderabad, Grover said Central Pollution Control Board in its 2015 report stated that toxic waste had high mercury content of 904 mg/kg. "Based on this, the 337 tons of waste incinerated should have contained an estimated 49 kg of mercury," he added.

Grover said the 2025 report "inexplicably" claimed that mercury was not detected in the incinerated ash or residue. "Scientifically, mercury does not simply disappear; its 'absence' in the 2025 report indicates either a massive environmental leak has occurred or, more likely, the testing process failed to detect it," he added.

SC said HC had monitored the incineration process and delegated the disposal to an oversight committee of experts. The petitioner must approach HC that would decide whether to seek oversight committee's response about Prof Qureshi's views, it said.

Maha bank case closure: Court says no intent to defraud

Mumbai: A special court for MP/MLA cases that last month accepted economic offences wing's closure report in 25,000 crore Maharashtra State Cooperative Bank scam case involving the late Ajit Pawar, deputy CM Sunetra Pawar and their nephew NCP (SP) MLA Rohit Pawar held that "no loss was caused to the bank due to allotment of loan" and concluded that "no personal wrongful gain is acquired by the directors", **reports Rebecca Samervel**.

It held that no criminal conspiracy was hatched by the accused. The allegations centred on 31 district central cooperative banks under MSCB that granted loans to sugar factories, which later defaulted. Court said the record did not show mens rea (intention to deceive).

SC rejects Bengal's plea against NIA probe into Jan violence

Dhananjay.Mahapatra @timesofindia.com

Bengal govt contested that NIA could not have been entrusted with probe when incidents did not warrant UAPA invocation . HC will decide whether UAPA could be slapped, SC said

New Delhi: In a setback to West Bengal govt on the eve of polls, Supreme Court Monday refused to entertain the state's plea challenging Centre's decision to order NIA probe into Beldanga violence in Murshidabad district in Jan.

Appearing for the state, senior advocate Kalyan Banerjee told a bench of CJI Surya Kant and Justice Joymalya Bagchi that NIA could not have been entrusted with the probe when the incidents did not warrant invocation of Unlawful Activities (Prevention) Act (UAPA).

The bench said whether UAPA provisions could be slapped on the accused persons in the case would be determined by HC after perusing the report NIA is due to submit. Banerjee persisted, asking how NIA could register FIR under UAPA when the investigation by West Bengal police into the violence did not show any offence that could attract the Act's provisions.

Calcutta high court on Jan 20, in response to a plea seeking NIA probe filed by leader of opposition in West Bengal Suvendu Adhikari, directed Centre to entrust the investigation into the Jan 16-17 violence in Beldanga and adjoining parts of Murshidabad district to NIA.

The CJI-led bench said HC would decide the correctness of invocation of UAPA against accused in the violent incidents during protests against the death of migrant worker Alauddin Sheikh in Jharkhand after perusing the NIA report. HC would hear all parties during consideration of the NIA report, it said and dismissed the state's appeal.

A similar petition by Mamata Banerjee govt challenging Calcutta high court's Jan 20 order giving discretion to Centre to entrust the probe to NIA was disposed of by CJI-led bench on Feb 11. The order had said, "We do not deem it appropriate to express any opinion on the merits of this matter at this decidedly premature stage."

HC hears CBI petition in Delhi liquor policy case

Abhinav.Garg@timesofindia.com

New Delhi: Noting that there is no stay order from Supreme Court, Delhi high court Monday further heard CBI's plea challenging the discharge of former CM **Arvind Kejriwal** and 22 others in liquor policy case.

During brief hearing, one of the counsels for AAP functionaries informed Justice Swarana Kanta Sharma that they moved SC challenging HC's last order where it issued them notice and stayed the trial court's observations against CBI's lead investigator.

"I have not received any stay yet. Till the court gets an order staying the proceedings, the case has to proceed as per law," Sharma orally observed, and granted more time to the respondents to file their replies.

HC listed CBI's petition assailing the trial court's decision for hearing on April 6 and noted that Kejriwal and the others did not appear on the first day of the hearing. When asked to file their stand, they sought more time to do so.

Opposing the extension of time, Solicitor General Tushar Mehta, representing CBI, said the trial court's "perverse" order "cannot remain on record even for a second more than necessary" and that the respondents should not be given more than a week to file their response.

A reply is not necessary when the entire record of the trial court is available, he argued, adding although Kejriwal has the right to file an appeal, it must be ensured their petition in the apex court gets listed, as the respondents "cannot keep it pending" in SC's registry.

Senior advocate N Hariharan, appearing for AAP members, shot back that "he was not in charge" of Supreme Court's registry, and at least four weeks' time should be given to them for filing their replies. "I will take it up on April 6," HC said.

Gujarat HC to GPSC: Show us 'original text' of Arthashastra

Saeed.Khan@timesofindia.com

Ahmedabad: High court directed Gujarat Public Service Commission (GPSC) last week to produce the "original text" of Kautilya's Arthashastra, specifically the first English translation published in 1915, after a heated courtroom exchange over the correctness of an answer to a question in a GPSC examination.

On Monday, GPSC failed to produce the edition, and instead provided only a PDF of the book, and said it was unable to identify the source of PDF. This led Justice Nirzar Desai to criticise GPSC for being stubborn and egoistic, and for not accepting its blunder.

Since no original book was produced, Gujarat HC raised questions on the authenticity of the text GPSC had used to frame the question.

It directed GPSC secretary to file an affidavit addressing "whether, when the original source is not available, it would be permissible to frame questions from a book, the physical copy of which is not available, and the source from which the PDF copy was downloaded is also not available. If such practice is permissible, it shall also be clarified how the authenticity of such a book is to be determined".

HC asked how candidates could reasonably be expected to refer to century-old books and sought a reply by March 20 on whether the Arthashastra is widely available to the public and, if a physical copy does exist, which specific edition was used to select the question.

The question that appeared in the 2025 GPSC exam asked candidates to evaluate two statements about Kautilya's Arthashastra: first, that the book was written in Sanskrit, and second, that it deals with economics. A candidate, who fell just one mark short of qualifying for second round of recruitment process, challenged GPSC's official answer key.

The options given were — A: Only one; B: Only two; C: One and two both; D: None of the above. The candidate chose 'C' as her answer, but the GPSC disagreed.The candidate's lawyers submitted that GCERT and NCERT books showed that her answer was correct. However, GPSC did not agree.

5 convicted, 35 acquitted in 2016 Una flogging case

TIMES NEWS NETWORK

Rajkot: A court in Veraval town of Gujarat's Gir Somnath district held five of the 41 people facing trial in 2016 Una flogging case guilty, while acquitting 35 others. The quantum of punishment is likely to be announced Tuesday. On July 11, 2016, six members of a Dalit family were publicly flogged by a group of men on suspicion of cow slaughter in Samadhiyala village of Una tehsil.

Speaking to **TOI**, district govt pleader Ketansinh Vala said special court judge J J Pandya convicted Ramesh Bhagvan Jadav, Rakesh Rasik Joshi, Nagji Daya Vaniya, Pramodgiri Rameshgiri Gauswami and Balvantgiri Gauswami under IPC and SC/ST (Prevention of Atrocities) Act, 1989. "One accused died during the trial and the case against him was abated," Vala said. Of the 41 accused, four were policemen.

The complainant, Vashram Sarvaiya, said the family was unhappy with the outcome of the case. "Considering how we struggled for justice and what we suffered over the past 10 years, we are not satisfied with this conviction. The people who terrorised us were acquitted because the prosecution failed to prove their role," Sarvaiya said.

SENTENCING TODAY

Sarvaiya, his three brothers and their parents were assaulted while skinning a dead cow — their traditional occupation — by members of an upper caste group. Four victims were stripped, tied to a car and paraded.

Health claim denied? Why the real fault may be a documentation error

Preeti.Kulkarni@timesofindia.com

When Mumbai resident Parth Nagda's father was hospitalised for heart ailment in 2025, he was not worried about the expenses as his family floater plan covered his parents. However, his health insurer rejected the claim, citing non-disclosure of pre-existing chronic kidney disease. "My father never had kidney-related issues until then. The nephrologist had merely flagged the high creatinine levels (an indicator of kidney function) at the time of admission," explains Nagda. Only later did he realise that the doctor on duty at the time of discharge had erroneously mentioned 'chronic kidney disease' (CKD) in the summary, leading to claim rejection.

"The nephrologist's notes had only a question mark against 'CKD', indicating uncertainty, but the resident doctor labelled it definitively. This led to rejection despite no prior CKD history," says Mayank Gosar, an insurance consultant who handled Nagda's case.

Emails to the company's grievance redress officers, along with a clarification letter from the nephrologist, yielded no result. Finally, Nagda and Gosar turned to social media. "Only then did the insurer act and reopen the claim. However, it sought a notarised letter from the doctor — an unusual demand. The doctor eventually provided it and the claim was cleared," adds Gosar.

Like Nagda, Manish Srivastava also suffered due to an incorrect entry in his wife's discharge summary. "She had knee swelling and fever and was treated at a Delhi hospital. I filed a claim under my corporate policy, which was paid. However, the hospital advised further procedures and tests, so we decided to go to Lucknow," he says. This is where things took a surprising turn. "When I filed a reimbursement claim for the treatment at the Lucknow hospital, the insurer noticed 'HTN' mentioned in the health history, which was part of the Delhi hospital's discharge summary. It rejected the claim, citing non-disclosure of pre-existing hypertension. She has never suffered from this condition," says Srivastava.

When hospital errors trigger claim disputes

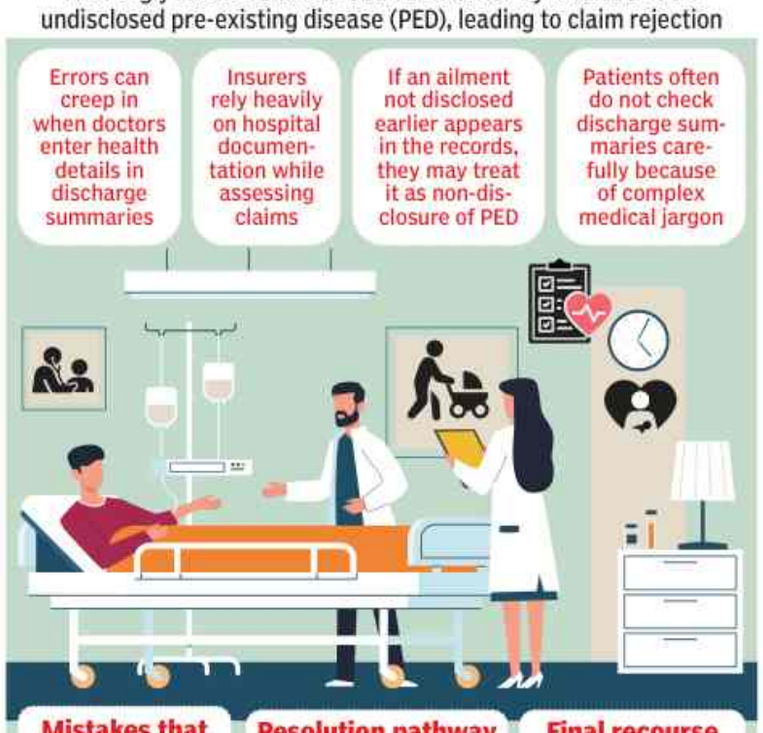
A wrongly recorded ailment can be treated by insurers as an undisclosed pre-existing disease (PED), leading to claim rejection

Errors can creep in when doctors enter health details in discharge summaries

Insurers rely heavily on hospital documentation while assessing claims

If an ailment not disclosed earlier appears in the records, they may treat it as non-disclosure of PED

Patients often do not check discharge summaries carefully because of complex medical jargon



Mistakes that can affect claims
- Typographical errors
- Suspected conditions presented as confirmed diagnoses
- Incorrect PED duration mentioned
- Non-existent ailment included in medical history

Resolution pathway
- Approach the hospital immediately
- Request a clarification or correction letter from the treating doctor
- Re-submit the claim, along with the certified letter

Some insurers might insist on a notarised letter from the doctor acknowledging the error

Final recourse
- Write to the insurer's grievance redress department
- If unresolved, approach insurance ombudsman
- As a last resort, consider approaching consumer courts

Persistence is the key

Common Occurrences

Despite a letter from the hospital admitting a typographical error, the insurer refused the claim. "It finally paid part of the claim after a formal complaint to the grievance redress department and multiple follow-ups," says Shilpa Arora, co-founder and COO, Insurance Samadhan, which helped Srivastava resolve the issue. Such errors occur when doctors under pressure misstate details. "We have seen mistakes like hypertension duration listed as six years instead of two, leading to claim denials," she adds.

Many others suffer for no fault of theirs, say insurance experts. Policyholders often do not scrutinise their discharge summaries as the medical jargon is not easy to decipher. However, errors can creep in, potentially impacting claim settlement.

"Incorrect entries in medical records are more common than we realise," says Kapil Mehta, co-founder, SecureNow, an insurance broking firm. "I have come across a case where the patient was admitted following an injury, but the discharge document mentioned he had had arthritis for a long time," says Mehta.

However, the patient had never been diagnosed with arthritis and had only complained of occasional stiffness in hands and legs.

"The insurer interpreted this as an undisclosed pre-existing condition and rejected the claim," he adds.

Hospitalisation Checklist

At admission, attendants — and patients, if possible — should remain vigilant. "Doctors prepare initial records during admission. Request and review them to spot errors early. An early check is more effective than waiting for discharge summaries, which may be too late or harder to correct," says Mahavir Chopra, co-founder, Beshak.org. It's best if someone who knows the patient's medical history shares the details with doctors. "Carrying all the medical files is the best practice. If the patient is able to, s/he should answer doctors' questions directly to avoid errors. This reduces risks from memory lapses or inaccurate recounting of medical history," adds Chopra.

Policyholders need to be honest about their health conditions when buying insurance. Otherwise, undisclosed details can haunt future claims. "Maintaining accurate health records helps prevent disputes over pre-existing conditions. If disputes arise despite transparency — such as doctors' documentation errors — policyholders should proactively seek clarifications or provide supporting medical letters to resolve the disputes," says Gosar.

You must be persistent if your claims are rejected because of such errors. "If a mistake has already been recorded, you may have no option but to go back to the hospital and request a clarification letter. There have been instances where doctors have issued written apologies or correction notes acknowledging the error, and such documentation can strengthen your case," says Mehta. A formal, certified letter from the doctor is a must.

"The claims will then have to be resubmitted, along with the certified letter, to address the reason for rejection. Though the procedure seems straightforward, it depends on timely cooperation from doctors and hospitals," says Arora.

Maintain Records

You also need to maintain a record of your previous diagnostic reports, which is easy as diagnostic companies' apps and websites store most details online. "For instance, if a doctor writes that you have high blood sugar, but you have test reports showing normal readings, the records can help counter such claims," adds Mehta.

Perseverance is the key. If the insurer doesn't respond, escalate the matter to insurance ombudsmen and consumer courts.

Beyond gold: The need to go heavy on metals

Abhinav.Kaul@timesofindia.com

The past year's commodity rally has extended well beyond the traditional safe-haven metals of gold and silver. The move has revived discussions around the early stages of a broader commodities upcycle. Silver has been the standout performer, rallying about 155% over the past year, while gold has gained roughly 80%. Further, industrial and catalytic metals have also seen substantial price appreciation: platinum is up nearly 120%, palladium about 75%, and copper roughly 30% during the same period.

In India, direct commodity exposure remains limited. Mutual funds largely offer only gold and silver, while other commodities are accessed mainly through derivatives on exchanges. Some overseas mutual funds offer access to international mining companies, but their availability is largely restricted due to regulatory limits on overseas investments by mutual fund companies.

Amidst this, overseas investing platforms are providing a new route: global commodity ETFs and stocks listed abroad, allowing Indian investors to access a broader basket, including industrial metals and energy, without trading futures directly. Under the Liberalised Remittance Scheme (LRS), resident Indians can invest up to $2,50,000 per financial year in overseas assets.

"Amid the current wartime environment, investors are flocking to commodities on our platform. Over 15% of assets under custody are now in commodities — something we hadn't seen earlier," says Nitish Sahni, co-founder and CEO of Paasa. The opportunity in commodities via global ETFs goes far beyond just precious metals. Data from investing platforms such as Vested and Paasa show that among the most popular options are SPDR Gold Shares (GLD), VanEck Gold Miners ETF (GDX), Global X Copper Miners ETF (COPX), Global X Uranium ETF (URA), VanEck Rare Earth and Strategic Metals ETF (REMX) and abrdn Physical Platinum Shares ETF (PPLT).

Indian investors aren't looking to replace precious metals, but looking for additional ways to put their money to work alongside it. "The deeper shift is structural, not behavioural," says Subho Moulik, founder and CEO, Appreciate.

Interest in metal-focused investments has been rising among Indian investors using global platforms. According to Vested Finance, investments in metal ETFs on its platform grew by 106.11% in 2025, reflecting the growing appetite for commodity exposure. Another notable trend is the growing preference for ETFs over individual companies. According to Vested, over 90% of metal investments on the platform are now routed through ETFs, both physical metal ETFs and sector-focused funds, while individual mining stocks account for less than 10%.

Why Indian investors may look overseas

Domestic markets offer limited commodity options; investors thus seek global ETFs

INDIA

Limited direct commodity access
- Gold ETFs
- Silver ETFs
- Commodity futures
- Metal exposure via stocks

GLOBAL MARKETS

Wide commodity ETF universe
- Precious metal ETFs (gold, silver)
- Industrial metal ETFs (copper, zinc)
- Battery/energy-transition metal ETFs (lithium, nickel)
- Strategic metal ETFs (uranium, rare earths)

This shift suggests that investors increasingly prefer the diversification and simplicity offered by ETFs when taking exposure to global commodity markets. "Three or four months ago, we saw strong demand for uranium, driven by the push for small nuclear reactors, rising energy needs and the broader AI wave. Recently, however, the geopolitical environment has turned more risk-off, and interest is shifting toward industrial metals," says Sahni.

Investing in global commodity ETFs via overseas platforms offers diversification, but also brings extra costs and risks. One major cost arises from foreign exchange conversion. Since investments are typically made in US dollars, investors must convert rupees before remitting funds abroad. Indian banks usually charge a forex markup of around 1.2-1.6% when converting INR to USD. In addition to forex costs, investors may incur brokerage or commission charges, which typically starts from 0.05% of the invested dollar amount per trade, depending on the platform.

Certain companies may also charge platform fees, and some may levy withdrawal fees when investors transfer money back, adding another layer of cost that can eat into overall returns.

Beyond costs, investing in metals and commodity-linked ETFs carries inherent risks due to the cyclical and volatile nature of commodity markets.

As a result, while global commodity ETFs can help diversify portfolios and provide exposure to global macro trends, financial planners often caution that allocations should remain moderate and aligned with an investor's risk tolerance.

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ASK THE EXPERTS

I recently fractured my wrist. I was treated with plaster, and no hospitalisation was needed. However, my Rs 7,000 claim was rejected on the ground that OPD treatments are not covered under my group health insurance policy. Is that correct? — *N Kumar*

Your claim is not payable under a group health insurance unless there is a specific provision to cover OPD costs. It is likely that approaching the consumer courts will not be fruitful. They are also likely to go by the policy wordings. Fractures are typically covered in a Group Personal Accident plan. You might want to check if you have personal accident coverage, as this is often offered along with group health insurance schemes. For the future, you might want to buy an individual personal accident plan for such accidents. If you have a personal health insurance then it may also be possible to add a personal accident rider to that when renewing your insurance.

Kapil Mehta
Co-Founder, SecureNow

If a spouse gifts money that is invested in fixed deposits, the interest is clubbed with the donor's income. If the same money is invested in equities or mutual funds, are capital gains and dividends taxed in the recipient spouse's hands? Kindly clarify. — *Mukesh K Teckchandani*

Section 64(1)(iv) of the Income Tax Act, 1961, provides that when an individual transfers an asset to spouse without adequate consideration, any income arising directly or indirectly from such asset is clubbed in the hands of the donor spouse. The term "income" is wide enough to cover interest, dividends as well as capital gains. Accordingly, if money gifted to the spouse is invested in fixed deposits, the interest is clubbed; similarly, if the same funds are invested in equity shares or equity mutual funds, dividends and capital gains (both short-term and long-term) are also clubbed with the donor spouse's income. However, an important exception exists for second-level income: if the income earned from the gifted asset is reinvested, the income arising from such reinvestment is taxable in the hands of the recipient's spouse.

Umesh Kumar Jethani
Founder, ApkiReturn

Please send your queries to *toiwealthplus@timesofindia.com*, mentioning your full name and city of residence.

A thought for today

This is what separated us from you; we made demands. You were satisfied to serve the power of your nation and we dreamed of giving ours her truth

ALBERT CAMUS, Letters to a German Friend

Wars, Govts, Facts

Trump's rage-posting on US media coverage of war shows why, in democracies, factual conflict reporting is so crucial

While many Americans were watching the Oscars, their president was rage-posting "FIRED". Not at his FCC chair, Brendan Carr, but those Carr is targeting. He's threatening to revoke certain broadcasters' licences, accusing them of "news distortion". Trump's post on Truth Social says he is "thrilled" at this mission. Because he's cheesed off that despite winning a presidential election "IN A LANDSLIDE", various newspapers and TV news channels continue to report on his actions, independently, and critically. He wants them to be charged with "TREASON". In US, this is a crime punishable by death. It is also very, very narrowly defined, as "levying war" against US, or aiding its enemies. Basically, Trump is doing classic dictators' math, which is to equate fidelity to him as loyalty to the nation.

Except, obviously, democracies are different. US's First Amendment is about ensuring that power stays accountable to the people, rather than the other way around. This is no less so in times of war. War involves life-and-death decisions made by govts on behalf of citizens. Denying them info about these decisions, robs their consent of meaning. In Israel, there is high public support for the Iran war. But there is also heavy censorship of filming, photographing, or otherwise reporting Iranian missile impacts. Yes, today's wars are taking place in the age of social media and AI. Yes, these are information wars, as much as anything else. And what Trump's post does is to basically admit that, right now, Iran is doing pretty well in the information war. That's quite something to concede, and quite a comment on all of America's human and tech resources.

Indian news TV channels, for their part, are processing Iran war reportage through a spectacle max machine. Facts and speculation are churned through a *Dhurandhar*-style amplifier. But these are only one element in our diverse, pluralistic mediascape. Overall health of the marketplace of ideas, is what matters. Serious journos can get things wrong in the fog of war (these will get corrected by other journos). But so can commanders-in-chief. Remember Trump saying, "In the first hour, it was over." Whether it is possibly an American strike hitting an Iranian girls' school, or US air force refuelling planes getting hit, American press is doing its job, in digging beyond their govt's denials. It's a critical job. Look back at the Iraq war press coverage. It wasn't the coverage that defied govt narratives, but that deferred to these, which later proved to have failed the public. A free press matters more than ever at precisely those moments, when power is most tempted to not admit reality.

Out Of The Mouth Of Babes...

...often comes the best of wisdom, as two pre-teen Tamil boys have shown. Adults, pay attention

Two, toothy'n grinny, underprivileged kids, "child influencers" on Insta and YouTube, made it to their chief minister's office – and got 15 minutes of adult-world fame. Their discovery, by the Tamil adult world and beyond, showed what simple joy, boring adults miss out on. Pre-teen siblings Deva and Jiva from a village in TN's Cuddalore, make tiny reels – 20 to 40 secs long – on, mostly, the value of education, the Joneses trap (comparing with 'have-mores'), and a nod to poor parents' efforts to send kids to school. No doubt, the push for peer awareness and motivation has parental support; some sound parenting there. And no doubt, as Deva and Jiva turn teens, their views will evolve, as is the nature of the beast called teenage.

Now that they've met Stalin, their bobbling heads are bound to host more thoughts – it'll be fun to see if lessons on bluster & ego will follow. Handling even 15 minutes of fame can be tough, but what these two kids aren't, is camera shy. Neither can they be accused of stage fright. The rural family's creativity, and the fact that they've been on social media, are a fine example of the power of internet. It has democratised creative expression, and spurred aspirations. The little boys are invisible to the larger world. But they are mini-stars in their algorithmic world, with their ideas and spontaneous performance, and sheer creativity.

Instagram

One reel, in particular, strikes a chord. The younger brother is scrolling endlessly. Older brother: "What're you doing all day?" Jiva: "Watching reels." Over the next few seconds, the message: "If you spend all your time watching others succeed, you'll never create your own success." Peer wisdom, life-lessons, almost Panchatantra-style, are lessons not just for kids, but for adults too. Out of the mouths of babes...

Circles & cylinders

On the shape of things, and how it shifts

Anil Abraham

"You must get into shape!" Kamala pronounced, as she casually body-shamed my generous proportions. I insisted that round was also a shape, as I quickly wolfed down a triangular samosa, while scrolling to check the goss from all over the globe. Cylinders were being discussed frantically, while panic and people queued up in serpentine lines. Geometric shapes were in fashion again. The globe had become a smaller sphere, with a tiny Strait of Hormuz making world leaders bend to its whims, and opt to follow the straight and narrow path.

"What's cooking?" Kamala asked sarcastically, as I browsed tempting pics of conical paper dosas. Not one square meal was cooking in our house anyway, ever since cylinders became the subject of shortage rumours. A similar crisis must have inspired Picasso to create cubism – an art form that many find difficult to wrap their heads around. Art is subjective, as Badshah must have realised, with his lyrics and visuals creating more controversy than the Epstein Files.

Much like Timothée Chalamet, who found himself a square peg in a round hole, after his insensitive remarks on the fading relevance of ballet and the opera. The woke police have been running circles around Chalamet, while he attempts to play ping-pong with the fact that his Oscar aspirations have been hurt by the ricochet of this remark.

Meanwhile the discussion has come full circle, with our own Mona Lisa of Mahakumbh fame making a bee-line to God's Own Country, bringing things back to square one, in her own personal Keralam Story. In nearby southern states, the eternal triangle figures in one Vijay's divorce, and another Vijay's wedding, both of which have the paparazzi running around in circles.

Meanwhile, Iran is insisting that countries shape up or ship out. Kamala has issued a similar warning to me, and I'm honestly attempting to use the cylinder shortage to get back into shape. But my friendly neighbour has distracted me from my target, by sending home a *dabba* of fresh hot *jalebis*. How am I going to be a shape-shifter, while my diet is spiralling out of control in concentric circles?! World affairs or my protuberant paunch – a vicious circle is the shape of things to come.

Electric Cooking Is Good Geostrategy

LPG troubles should push govt to free India from overseas dependency. Use LPG subsidy to subsidise new kitchen-use products for the poor. And to meet higher power demand, use Indian coal smartly

TK Arun

India should cook on electricity, generated from domestic renewables and coal, not imported hydrocarbons, whether liquid petroleum gas (LPG) or natural gas distributed to consumers as piped natural gas (PNG). Here is how to go about it.

In the kitchen | We need to cook on induction cooktops, not the traditional heaters in which a heating coil snakes around inside the grooves of a ceramic plate, not even infrared stovetops. When a heating source is placed below the cooking vessel, the heat transfer takes place through radiation. About 60% of the radiant heat is wasted.

The induction cooktop works by producing a magnetic field on top, not heat. You can place your hand on it, and feel no heat. When a vessel made of magnetic material – iron, steel (except for some kinds of stainless steel that retain their crystalline structure) – is placed on the cooktop, an induced magnetic field creates eddies of current inside the wall of the vessel, and the material's electrical resistance creates heat. About 90% of the electrical energy supplied to the induction cooktop is converted into cooking heat.

Cooking vessels made of clay, ceramic, or aluminium will not work. Cookware specifically made for induction cooking has a composite structure: the bottom layer is made of a ferromagnetic material, the middle layer of copper or aluminium to conduct the heat efficiently to the third layer, on which the food rests, made of suitable materials.

To stir-fry in a wok, you'll need a flat-bottomed wok whose sides do not heat up the way a conventional wok on a gas burner does, and stir a bit more than usual, as the food at the bottom will cook more than the food touching the sides.

To boil a litre of water, an LPG stove takes 89% more energy than an induction cooktop. At current, unsubsidised prices of LPG and electricity in Delhi, the fuel cost of cooking would come down 30% by switching from LPG to induction cooktops.

The well-off can capitalise the future savings on fuel to make the investment on the cooktop and cookware. CSR funds and state subsidy from avoided LPG subsidy can help the poor finance the transition. Govt additionally needs to set standards for induction cooktops, and incentivise local manufacture of the glass-ceramic composite plate on which vessels are placed, the copper coil that produces the magnetic field, the inverter that boosts current frequency, thermal sensors, the cooling fan inside the cooktop, and the microcontroller that regulates the stove's behaviour according to the settings selected.

Power generation | While nationwide adoption of induction cooking would make a net saving on energy, its consumption as electricity would have to go up. In transport as well, massive energy savings can be made by switching from hydrocarbons to electricity. Can India produce the additional power required? The question is redundant. World Bank publishes data on per capita power consumption across countries. India's level is one-third the world average, and less than one-fifth China's (2023 figures). If India is to prosper, it must produce a whole lot more power.

Image: AI

Does India have access to the fuel needed to step up generation? The sun, the wind, and the waves have energy waiting to be tapped. Non-fossil fuels account for half the generation capacity, but account for barely 30% of the power generated. The rest is from coal (20,000 MW of gas-based capacity lies idle).

India has the world's fourth or fifth largest deposits of coal, of which 220bn tonnes are proven reserves. India mines about a billion tonnes a year, and imports a fifth as much. While the inefficient state monopoly on coal mining was done away with in 2015, bidding for mining rights could start only in 2020. Then, too, blocks were offered without first putting in place the needed forest and environmental clearances, and societal buy-in from communities, who stood to be displaced and had to be rehabilitated.

Would-be merchant miners bid too high, failed at obtaining clearances, and returned the blocks. India has gone back to allowing captive coal mining by energy-intensive industries like power, steel, and cement, although captive mining had been dubbed a source of massive corruption, and 204 licences cancelled.

The biggest scam in coal is that it lies underground, unutilised, while India has to import a fifth of its coal requirement, spending scarce foreign exchange. This reflects failings in policy and governance, besides in operational efficiency. Fixing this is a function of political will.

Coal gasification | Luckily, it's possible to use coal without mining it, if you gasify it. Coal is burned underground, starved of oxygen and in the presence of steam, to form CO, carbon monoxide, and H2, hydrogen, with traces of methane and moisture. This mixture that comes out is called synthesis gas or syngas. It burns, and can be used as the fuel for a gas turbine. Capturing the waste heat from gas turbines also allows a steam cycle to produce power in combination.

Syngas lends itself to chemical reactions to create natural gas or methane, which, in turn, can be used to synthesise hydrocarbons, including aviation fuel, diesel, and petrol.

Interestingly, Nazis used this process during World War II to utilise German coal and power their Messerschmitts and Panzers.

Climate action | India must, simultaneously, invest in R&D to develop and deploy technologies for carbon capture and use on a massive scale. Freedom from colonial slavery of the mind means trusting Indian capacity for R&D, and funding it.

Oscars: One Safe Choice After Another

One Battle After Another, with its hollow depiction of activism, is just the kind of film the Academy likes to reward, writes a film critic. The movie stands with immigrants, but without sticking its neck out

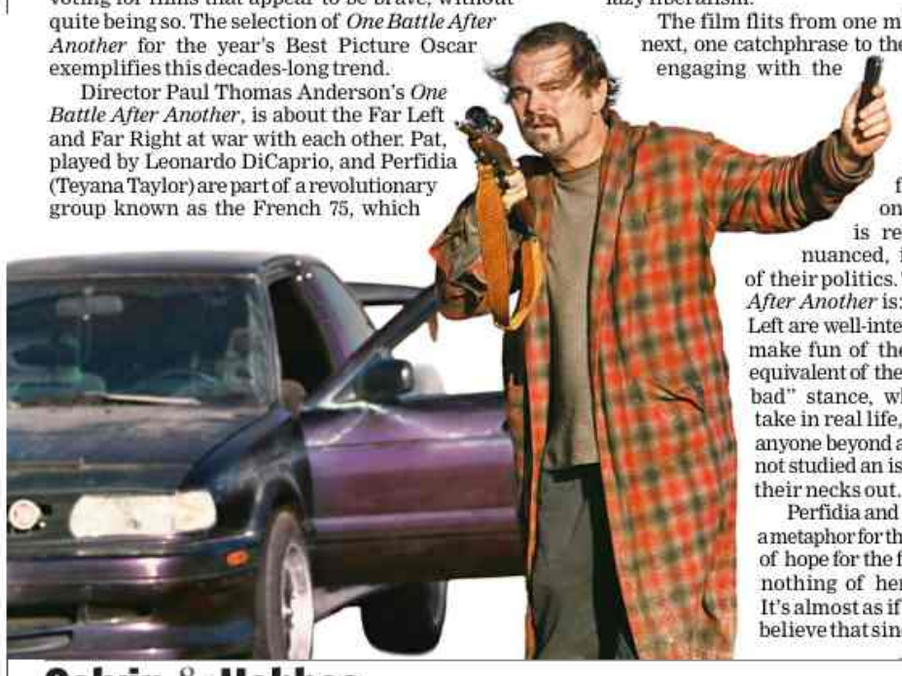
Anna M M Vetticad

Social media is abuzz with conversations about Javier Bardem's unequivocal political declarations, at the just-concluded Oscars. "No to war. And Free Palestine," the globally acclaimed Spanish actor said, while on stage at the Dolby Theatre in Hollywood, to announce an award.

"I really appreciate his voice in a room like that, where literally no one else said anything," the young actor Hannah Einbinder remarked afterwards. While stars in attendance made no effort to camouflage their reticence, about the most pressing world issues of the day, members of the Academy of Motion Picture Arts and Sciences, which administers the Oscars, kept up their tradition of voting for films that appear to be brave, without quite being so. The selection of *One Battle After Another* for the year's Best Picture Oscar exemplifies this decades-long trend.

Director Paul Thomas Anderson's *One Battle After Another*, is about the Far Left and Far Right at war with each other. Pat, played by Leonardo DiCaprio, and Perfidia (Teyana Taylor) are part of a revolutionary group known as the French 75, which believes that violence is the path to change. While rescuing immigrants from a detention centre one day, Perfidia degrades the commanding officer, Steven (Sean Penn), who later catches her about to commit a crime, and releases her in exchange for a promise of sex. Their tryst results in a daughter, whose birth is followed by the three leads branching out, along different paths.

On the face of it, *One Battle After Another* is a saga of activists fighting xenophobia, racism, and right-wing hatred. The script makes a show of standing with characters who put their lives on the line, to oppose injustice. Their adversaries are also written as repulsive creatures. Steven, for one, is known to say: "You want to save the planet? You start with immigrants." Wade past the energetic music and lavish scale though, and what you get is a lengthy display of superficiality, and lazy liberalism.



The film flits from one militant scenario to the next, one catchphrase to the next, never seriously engaging with the issues these activists deal with.

It also caricatures them, making them out to be somewhat silly folk, whose fixation on a liberal vocabulary is referenced, minus any nuanced, in-depth examination of their politics. The crux of *One Battle After Another* is: the Right are evil, the Left are well-intentioned, but come, let's make fun of them. It's the cinematic equivalent of the "both sides are equally bad" stance, which centrist liberals take in real life, to avoid antagonising anyone beyond a point, or when they've not studied an issue sufficiently to stick their necks out.

Perfidia and Steven's child is clearly a metaphor for this stance. She is a symbol of hope for the future, though we know nothing of her politics till the end. It's almost as if the writer wants us to believe that since Perfidia is black and a left-wing activist, Steven is white and a hate-mongering status-quoist, the fruit of their amalgamated genes will turn out alright.

While the film may seem to confront Trump's anti-immigrant establishment, it safeguards itself by trivialising the establishment's critics.

The Best Picture Oscar for *One Battle After Another* is no surprise though, considering that the Oscars have a long history of making similarly careful choices. Twenty years back, when the Best Picture nomination for Ang Lee's love story between two homosexual men, *Brokeback Mountain*, raised the hackles of conservatives, Academy voters gave the trophy to Paul Haggis's *Crash*, a reasonably engaging but simplistic take, on race relations in contemporary society. *Crash* had enough redemptive moments assigned to characters from dominant social groups, to avoid offending too many people.

Since the Oscars So White campaign and the Black Lives Matter movement placed a spotlight on the lack of diversity at the Oscars, the Academy has made an apparent attempt to improve racial representation in nominations, but treads gently even while doing so. Dee Rees' critically acclaimed *Mudbound*, a gut-wrenching tale of racism and the horrors of war, had four nominations at the 2018 Oscars, but did not even make it to the Best Picture category. *Hidden Figures*, a biographical drama about the actual struggles of female African-American mathematicians, who played a pivotal role in US's space programme in the 1950s and 1960s, did receive a Best Picture nomination, but lost out to *Moonlight*, which was focused on the intersection of racism and sexual orientation, but was mellower in comparison.

While *Hidden Figures* versus *Moonlight* is certainly debatable, *Green Book*'s white saviour complex is not. The Best Picture winner in 2019, *Green Book* is the story of an African-American musician and his white driver, who ends up becoming a source of friendship and warmth to his wealthy, lonely, initially haughty employer.

Green Book made inter-racial mingling tolerable for conservatives. Keeping in mind the Academy's track record, it is but natural that *One Battle After Another*, with its hollow understanding of activism, earned the top prize this year.

Calvin & Hobbes

Sacred*space*

There is neither creation nor destruction, neither destiny nor free will, neither path nor achievement. This is the final truth.

Ramana Maharshi

In Search Of Our Other Self

Jug Suraiya

In Plato's Symposium, a conversation between real and imagined participants, one of the speakers, Aristophanes, recounts how the concept of love came into being.

Humans originally were created with two heads, and two pairs each of arms and legs, and were perfectly content in this unity.

The god Zeus, envious of their happiness, and being the meddlesome tyrant that he was, divided them, leaving each sundered half in search of its counterpart to become complete again.

For Aristophanes, love was the search for this lost oneness, a view that Plato endorsed with his axiom, "Love is the pursuit of the whole."

The love of the ancient Greeks was not the heartthrob subject of Hollywood and Bollywood rom-coms, and institutionalised commercial events such as the celebration of Valentine's Day.

In Europe, the notion of romantic or courtly love was the socio-economic creation of the Middle Ages in the late 11th century, originating in the French regions of Provence and Aquitaine, and was propagated by wandering minstrels called troubadours who sang of gallant knights seeking to succour maidens fair.

In those times, marriages, particularly among the nobility, were like corporate mergers, based on the mutually beneficial joining of property and other assets; there was little or no love, or even affection, involved.

The knight in shining armour wooing his lady love became the emblem of a revolutionary protest against the mercantilism of matrimony, and the subjugation of women by the rigid rules of patriarchy.

But even in this avatar, the ideal of human love retained its agency as a quest, a seeking for a part of oneself that had to be found to effect an essential completion.

The tropes of romantic love are often used to express the divine delirium of mystics who, across the ages and climes, have sought union with the Self that lies beyond the self, which is bound to earthly dust.

THE SPEAKING TREE

The 16th century saint, Teresa of Avila, sought and found the divine in a rapture of adoration, addressing her Creator in terms of endearment one would use with regard to a lover who needs to be cajoled or chided when necessary.

"Lord, save us from gloomy saints," she beseeched her Significant Other, and on slipping and falling in mud, she sharply rebuked, "If this is how You treat your friends, no wonder You have so few left."

St Teresa's earthy spirituality has much in common with Sufism as articulated by poets such as Rumi and Ibn Arabi, both of whom could have been her Facebook friends.

Sufis use metaphors of intoxication and the passion of the unrequited lover in seeking that without which they cannot exist, thirst-parched travellers in a waterless desert.

"I am an atom; you are like the countenance of the Sun for me...Without wings, without feathers, i fly looking for you, i have become a rose petal and you are like the wind for me."

"I am jealous of you...i want you to belong to no other, not even to yourself. Be mine, be for me as you are in me, though you are not even aware of it."

Such a self in search of its other self is a love story like no other.

TIMES BUSINESS

THE TIMES OF INDIA, BENGALURU | TUESDAY, MARCH 17, 2026

The cost of crude for Indian refiners has shot up 51% so far in March as global prices have spiked in the wake of tension in West Asia and the Strait of Hormuz being blocked by Iran. On March 13, the Indian basket price rose to $136.6 a barrel. The average price for March is the highest since July 2023, when the Indian basket averaged $105.5 a barrel

Source: Petroleum Planning and Analysis Cell

PhonePe pauses IPO as war roils mkts

TIMES NEWS NETWORK

Mumbai: Walmart-backed PhonePe has paused its initial public offering (IPO) amid recent volatility in markets, which have fallen by about 7% since start of the West Asia conflict. In a statement on Monday, the fintech firm said that it will resume listing process once there is some stability in global capital markets. "We sincerely hope for a swift return to peace in all the affected regions. We remain committed to a public listing in India," said CEO Sameer Nigam.

The delay of PhonePe's targeted $1.3 billion IPO, which was set to be the second biggest public issue to be floated by a startup after Paytm's 2021 listing underlines the broader risk of a temporary slowdown of the domestic IPO market after its bull run last year.

Many companies are pushing back fundraises amid the West Asia driven market volatility. . PhonePe's IPO is an offer for sale (OFS) issue; Tiger Global and Microsoft will completely exit the company while parent Walmart which holds about 72% stake in the firm is paring its stake by 10%. The first local business from Walmart's stable to go public, PhonePe was initially planning an April listing on the bourses.

PhonePe, last valued at $12 billion was understood to be eyeing a valuation of up to $15 billion in the IPO, a target which would have been difficult to achieve in the current market scenario.

WPI inflation up at 2.1% on food, metal prices

New Delhi: WPI inflation inched up in Feb, led by rise in food and mineral product prices. Experts said elevated energy prices triggered by West Asia conflict could exert upward pressure. Inflation, as measured by wholesale price index rose annual 2.1% in Feb, higher than previous month's 1.8%. TNN

Magicbricks, NAREDCO team up for research and broadcast

TIMES NEWS NETWORK

New Delhi: Magicbricks has partnered with National Real Estate Development Council (NAREDCO) to institutionalise research-led conversations, structured policy dialogue, and large-scale knowledge dissemination across India's real estate ecosystem. This collaboration is set to strengthen data-driven engagement in the system.

Coming at a time when the sector is transitioning from cyclical volatility to a more formalised and regulated growth phase, the partnership is designed to bridge a long-standing gap between industry representation, credible market intelligence, and mass digital amplification. Since capital flows have become more institutional and regulatory frameworks more structured, there's a need for transparent, research-driven insight for sectoral decision-making, a joint statement said.

Under the one-year MoU, Magicbricks will serve as knowledge partner and official broadcast partner for NAREDCO initiatives. Together it will launch research reports, and various monthly co-branded newsletters, creating a unified pipeline for research dissemination that will help homebuyers navigate the market with greater clarity and access to data-backed insights.

WEST ASIA CRISIS: Govt Mulls Steps To Support Exports | Mood Lifts On D-St | Gas Shortage Takes Toll

Exporters seek moratorium on loan repayment for 6 mths

Sidhartha@timesofindia.com

New Delhi: Exporters on Monday sought a moratorium on loan repayment for six months, along with higher credit limits and longer tenure, amid indications that govt and RBI are working on a package to help offset the impact of the West Asia conflict, which may take a toll on exports during March.

During a meeting with the Reserve Bank of India on Monday, exporters sought a package on the lines of the one given by the regulator last year after the US imposed steep 50% tariffs on all Indian exports.

"...the moratorium on repayment of principal and interest announced by RBI for the period Oct-Dec 2025 for sectors affected by the US tariff measures may kindly be considered for further expansion and extension. It would be helpful if the existing moratorium on principal and interest repayments could be extended to cover the first and second quarters of 2026 and made applicable across export sectors, that are currently facing logistics-related disruptions," Fieo said in its proposal.

The meeting with RBI follows consultations with the department of financial services and the Indian Banks' Association last week. Exporters have also demanded a liberal regime to restructure short-term export credit, arguing it was required to offset the temporary cash flow stress caused by longer payment cycles from buyers.

The commerce department is considering insurance related relief for exporters. "Hopefully within this week...we will send you the detailed briefing on what are the steps we are taking in the commerce department to support the exports during this troubled time," commerce secretary Rajesh Agrawal told reporters.

After the European Union, West Asia is the second largest market for Indian exports, accounting for over 15% of the goods shipped from the country. Last year, exports to the region were valued at nearly $66 billion.

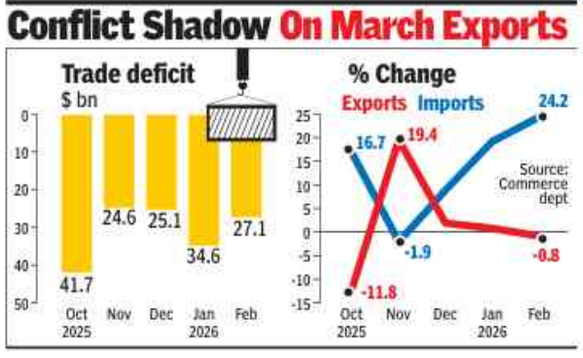
Agrawal said that there may be a "southward trend" in exports this month due to the logistical challenges posed by disruption in the Strait of Hormuz.

"...there are logistical challenges. Movement of ships...even air cargo also must face certain challenges because of some disruption in flights. So, it will have some impact. Indian exports to that region will suffer and their imports from India will also suffer because they are also dependent on India for multiple product categories," Agrawal said, adding that he was hoping to close the year with some export growth.

In Feb, India's exports stayed flat, falling 0.8% to $36.6 billion, while imports jumped 24% to $63.7 billion on account of a surge in gold and silver imports.

Gold imports jumped over three times to $7.4 billion, while the value of silver shipments surged nearly four times to $1.7 billion.

Conflict Shadow On March Exports



Short covering, bottom fishing lift sensex 939 pts

Hopes Up On Gas Tanker Reaching India From Hormuz; Index Gains Despite Strong FPI Selling

TIMES NEWS NETWORK

Mumbai: Short covering, especially during the closing hours of Monday's session, led to a smart reversal in sensex, which closed 939 points up at 75,503 points. The development came despite strong selling by foreign funds that offloaded shares worth Rs 9,366 crore, the second-highest single-session net outflow figure so far this year.

After days of sharp slides due to the war in West Asia, some buying at low levels also emerged and supported the market. The news about a gas tanker that passed through the Strait of Hormuz reaching an Indian port also added to the positive sentiment on Dalal Street, market players said.

The day's session started with sensex sliding about 150 points, falling to just below the 73,000 mark and then recovering slowly to remain in the green zone. Short covering in the last 90 minutes took the index to an intra-day high at 75,805 points, and it closed a tad below that level.

Nifty also followed a similar path to close at 23,409 points, up 258 points.

According to Vinod Nair of Geojit Investments, the market's late-session rebound was supported by value buying in domestically-oriented sectors such as auto, banking, and FMCG. However, he warned that near-term challenges persisted while valuations moderated, narrowing the premium valuation gap across several key sectors.

"In the near term, investor sentiment will hinge on developments in the Strait of Hormuz, where any easing of supply chain disruptions could provide further support. However, persistently elevated oil prices continue to weigh on broader market direction," Nair said. "Globally, attention remains focused on the upcoming US Fed policy outcome."

Some market players pointed out that Monday's rally was concentrated to blue chips and large caps while mid- and small-cap stocks mostly closed lower. Compared to a 1.3% up move in sensex, BSE's mid-cap index closed 0.6% lower while the small-cap index was down 0.5%. Also, the advance-decline ratio—an indication of the vibrancy in the market—was skewed towards laggards. On BSE, while 2,910 stocks closed lower, 1,470 closed higher. As a result, despite the strong sensex rally, addition to investors' wealth during the day was limited at about Rs 75,000 crore.

BLUE CHIPS RALLY, WIDER MKT SLUMPS

Index	Points	% Change
Sensex	75,503	▲ 1.3
BSE MidCap	41,916	▼ -0.6
BSE SmallCap	44,970	▼ -0.4

Source: BSE

Top sensex gainers (%)
UltraTech Cement 4.6
Trent 3
HDFC Bank 3

Biggest laggards (%)
Bharat Electronics Ltd -2.3
Power Grid -1.1
Sun Pharma -1

Rupee recovers 4p, closes at 92.42/$

Mumbai: The rupee closed at 92.42/$, four paise firmer than 92.46, yet close to last week's 92.48 record low. Losses stayed capped amid likely RBI support via state-run banks. Gulf tensions kept oil prices high, while US efforts to rally allies to secure Hormuz shipping lanes have made little headway. Brent crude rose over 1% to around $104.5 a barrel. Since the conflict began, oil has jumped more than 40%, delivering a terms-of-trade shock for the rupee, already weighed by a wide non-oil trade gap. TNN

Trade deficit with China tops $100bn

TIMES NEWS NETWORK

New Delhi: Despite Indian exports seeing good growth in recent months, India's trade deficit with China has topped the $100 billion mark for the first time, with still a month left for the fiscal year to close.

Latest data released by the commerce department estimated the trade deficit during April-Feb at $102 billion, as against $91.1 billion in the corresponding period last year. For the full year, India's trade deficit with China was just a shade under $100 billion. After the US, India has the highest trade deficit with China, with Vietnam ranked third.

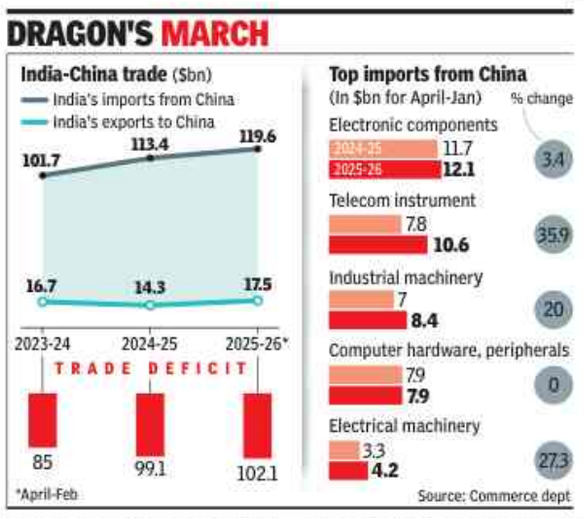
While India's exports to its neighbour have increased nearly 38% to $17.5 billion during April-Feb, imports rose over 15% on a bigger base to reach almost $120 billion.

While telecom instruments or smartphones, have seen a significant increase in exports to China — soaring almost six-fold to $2.3 billion during April-Jan (the latest period for which data is available) — oil products (133% jump to $2.1 bn) and copper items (675 to $500 million) have been among the top gainers as well. On the other hand, electrical machinery and telecom instruments have seen a sharp rise in imports, with electronic components being the top item in the goods shipped into India from across the border.

Although India has tried to set standards to guard against cheap and sub-standard imports, for several items it is dependent on China to keep manufacturing activity going. It includes components, machinery, chemicals and pharma ingredients, among others.

In contrast, China maintains tight checks including requirements for inspection and other standards that restrict the entry of Indian goods into its market despite several requests to relax the regulations.

DRAGON'S MARCH



Govt notifies new FDI norms

The department for promotion of industry and internal trade (DPIIT) on Monday notified changes in the FDI policy to permit overseas companies with Chinese shareholding of up to 10% to invest in India under the automatic route. AGENCIES

As mercury rises, AC cos sweat over gas availability

Asmita.Dey@timesofindia.com

Mumbai: Ahead of the onset of peak summers, a brisk business season for consumer durables companies, some air conditioner makers are feeling the heat of the West Asia conflict as restricted supplies of LPG and shortage of petrochemicals are beginning to hit production, industry executives said.

LPG is used in processes such as brazing of copper and curing of powder-coating while petrochemicals is key to the manufacturing of polymers which are used in the plastic mechanical parts of AC units. To be sure, there's no major disruption on ground as of now but if things do not get better, it could be a challenge heading into the season. For consumers who will already be paying more for new AC stocks which will hit the shelves around April-May on the back of price hikes, the war-led supply crunch could pose an added burden.

"We are facing certain challenges related to production. First is availability of LPG and PNG which are required for certain manufacturing processes in ACs and other product categories. Also, scarcity of petrochemicals is causing some disruption in day-to-day production. We are working with our vendors to curb wider impact," said Vikas Gupta, MD (operations) at PG Electroplast which manufactures ACs and a range of other white goods for brands. Given the likelihood of an extended summer, Gupta hopes the war will subside by then, helping demand. Temperatures have already started rising in parts of India and some forecasts have hinted at the possibility of El Niño later this year.

"Geopolitical tension in West Asia has started creating some supply-side constraints across certain input materials used in AC manufacturing," said Kamal Nandi, business head and EVP at appliances business of Godrej Enterprises Group which is working with vendors to optimise procurement strategies and ensure continuity of production. Besides limited supply of LPG, availability of key plastic raw materials like polypropylene and polystyrene has been meagre, accompanied by sharp price increases, Nandi said.

Epack Durable is looking at alternatives for brazing copper for ACs even though that will push up the cost of production, said MD & CEO Ajay Singhania. There has been no loss in production till now but gas agencies have said that there could be challenges going ahead if supply crunch remains. The company is now focusing on ramping up induction cooktops given the surge in demand, said Singhania.

New energy norms have already pushed up AC prices by about 5% with another 8%-10% hike on the back of high commodity costs, said B Thiagarajan, MD at Blue Star. "There is apprehension within the industry about supply challenges," said Thiagarajan. The vulnerability arises from supply concentration–about 88% of India's LPG imports come from West Asia and that equals about 54% of the country's total LPG demand. "If disruptions continue, the supply gap could be significant," said Sumit Pokharna, VP, fundamental research at Kotak Securities.

SUMMER OF DISCONTENT

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BEYOND OIL & GAS: HOW CONFLICT IMPACTS INDIA

West Asia isn't just a source of energy for India, but also a major hub for key imports, says a report

India's top non-energy imports from West Asia (2024)

Item	$bn	Share in India's imports (%)
Gold	16.6	28.9
Diamonds	7.7	47.5
Aircraft	4.3	32.0
Silver (unwrought or semi-manufactured)	2.0	30.6
Polymers of ethylene	1.9	50.4
Platinum	1.7	65.6
Fertilisers (Nitrogenous)	1.6	63.0
Cyclic hydrocarbons	1.5	47.9
Acylic alcohol	1.5	58.3
Fertilisers containing 2 or 3 elements of NPK	1.2	32.3

Source: Barclays

THE LIKELY IMPACT

Precious metals: India imports raw inputs from the region and exports these in the form of jewellery with West Asia being one of the biggest destinations. A prolonged supply disruption can impact exports as well

Parts of aircraft or NPK fertilisers Alternative markets (aircraft: Germany, France; fertiliser: Russia, China) seen offsetting the supply disruption

Nitrogenous fertilisers
1. Some pain seen from the supply hit
2. Govt may have to raise fertiliser subsidies, similar to its policy reaction following the Russia-Ukraine conflict
3. Already trying to diversify sources of imports, including from China

Hydrocarbons | Private refiners can be softly nudged to prioritise domestic supply before exporting

IDBI shares tank 17% after govt shelves sale

Mumbai: Shares of IDBI Bank fell 16.5% on Monday to Rs 77. The decline wiped out over Rs 16,000 crore in market capitalisation after reports said govt may shelve bids for a majority stake in the lender because offers were below its minimum price expectations. Govt has been attempting to sell its stake in the lender for four years.

The proposed transaction included a 30.5% stake held by govt and a 30.2% held by Life Insurance Corporation of India, which had rescued the bank in 2018 when it was weighed down by bad loans. The govt had planned to complete the stake sale by the end of this month. In an exchange filing, IDBI Bank said it had received no communication from the govt regarding the disinvestment process. TNN

Govt may defer CAFE 3.0 norms for car cos

Dipak Dash & Saksham Mehta | TNN

New Delhi: Amid lobbying by car companies, govt may end up deferring the implementation of Corporate Average Fuel Efficiency norms (CAFE 3.0) beyond April 2027. The PM's Office has held two meetings in the last three weeks and more deliberations on the issue are planned to work out a formula that is acceptable to industry and helps improve fuel efficiency and emission.

FUEL EFFICIENCY

At a meeting in PMO on Monday, the power ministry made a presentation on the proposed norms, while highlighting the "urgent" need to notify the norms. For the first time, the ministry presented a detailed assessment of the expected performance of the top five car makers in the country. It said that based on the proposed framework, which will be released for public comment, only Tata Motors will be able to meet the target between 2027-28 and 2031-32, while Maruti Suzuki and Hyundai Motors India may not make the cut.

Toyota-Kirloskar Motors will be able to meet targets in first three years, 2027-28 to 2029-30, while Mahindra & Mahindra will miss the goals in first three years. "Going by this, the proposed regime will end up in levying high penalty on companies that do not meet the target," said an official.

MakeMyTrip weighs India public offering

Firm Folds RedBus Into Local Entity

Supriya.Roy@timesofindia.com

Bengaluru: MakeMyTrip is evaluating a potential listing of its India business on domestic stock exchanges, a move that could give local institutional and retail investors access to the company as the Nasdaq-listed firm deepens its presence in one of the world's fastest-growing travel markets.

The Gurgaon-headquarterd company said it has completed an internal restructuring to bring its key India brands under a single entity, including the merger of RedBus India into MakeMyTrip (India).

The consolidated structure could potentially serve as the vehicle for a domestic listing, although the company said any such move would depend on regulatory approvals, market conditions and other corporate considerations.

A potential India listing could offer the company an additional avenue to raise capital while enabling it to use locally listed equity for future growth initiatives. The company said the move could also strengthen the MakeMyTrip brand in its core market and support long-term expansion plans.

The development comes as travel demand in India continues to remain strong, supported by rising incomes, growing digital adoption and relatively low penetration of organised travel services.

A potential India listing could offer MakeMyTrip an additional avenue to raise capital while enabling it to use locally listed equity for future growth initiatives

MakeMyTrip said its platform has served more than 87 million lifetime transacted retail customers, along with over 77,000 SME and corporate customers, while its mobile apps have crossed 549 million downloads.

The company also sold 32.5 million hotel room nights under its hotels and packages business and over 104.6 million bus tickets in the nine months ended December 2025.

Alongside the restructuring, the company announced strategic investments to strengthen its travel ecosystem. MakeMyTrip said it has completed the acquisition of a majority stake in Flamingo Transworld, a regional group holiday packages business with operations across Gujarat, Maharashtra, Rajasthan and Madhya Pradesh.

It has also made a minority investment in visa processing platform Atlys, which recently raised $36 million in a round led by Susquehanna Asia VC, with participation from Elevation Capital, Long Journey Ventures and Peak XV Partners. The investment is expected to help streamline visa application services for MakeMyTrip users while also creating cross-selling opportunities with Atlys' outbound traveller base.

Separately, the company said it is expanding the use of AI across its platform. Its AI-powered trip planner Myra currently handles more than 55,000 conversations a day across multiple languages, helping users with travel discovery, planning and bookings.

TIMES GLOBAL

THE TIMES OF INDIA, BENGALURU | TUESDAY, MARCH 17, 2026

NEVER MIND YOUR HAPPINESS; DO YOUR DUTY
— PETER DRUCKER

SEAN PENN WINS OSCAR FOR BEST SUPPORTING ACTOR, BUT GIVES EVENT A MISS TO VISIT UKRAINE; IT IS HIS THIRD WIN

HARRY & MEGHAN SLAM TOM BOWER FOR HIS BOOK ON ROYAL FAMILY, DESCRIBE HIS WRITING AS 'DERANGED CONSPIRACY'

Trump side-stepped diplomacy on way to war in Iran. Now, he wants all to help

Said May Delay China Summit, Warned Nato Of 'Bad' Future If It Doesn't Assist

Washington: US President Donald Trump relied on his gut and largely side-stepped diplomatic coordination as he made the decision to launch strikes on Iran with Israel. But now with the war's economic and geopolitical consequences unfurling rapidly, he's cajoling allies and other global powers to help mop up the mess.

Trump says he's asked roughly a half-dozen other countries to send warships to reopen the vital Strait of Hormuz. So far, none have committed. Trump even indicated he would use his long-planned trip to China to pressure Beijing to help with a new coalition meant to get oil tanker traffic moving through the strait — a notion that his treasury secretary later downplayed.

"We strongly encourage other nations whose economies depend on the strait far more than ours ... we want them to come and help us with the strait," Trump said at the White House on Monday, listing Japan, China, South Korea and several countries in Europe as examples. Trump has argued that the shipping channel is not something the US needs because of its own access to oil.

It's the type of bullying to action that has secured key foreign policy wins for the Republican president in his second term, like prompting nearly all Nato countries to up their defence spending last year after he spent years accusing allies of freeloading off American largess, and using tariffs to extract investments and concessions from trade partners.

With oil prices soaring and West Asia rattled by violence, there's little inclination from other countries to heed Trump's call. China is noncommittal. France is a maybe on escorting ships, when "circumstances permit." Britain is unlikely to dispatch a warship.

German Chancellor Friedrich Merz on Monday said the conflict cannot be resolved through military means and stressed that only a political solution can bring lasting stability. "Bombing it into submission is, in all likelihood, not the right approach," to creating a democratic govt in Iran, he said. Responding to Trump's calls to send warships, Merz said, "Nato is a defensive alliance, not an interventionist one."

In Trump's view, this lack of appetite for helping to secure the strait confirms his suspicions about the benefits of working with other countries, because "if we ever needed help, they won't be there for us." "I've always felt that was a weakness of Nato," Trump said Monday. "We were going to protect them, but I always said when in need, they won't protect us."

Yet not long after, Trump insisted the US didn't need help from anybody because "we're the strongest nation in the world." Nonetheless, the pressure campaign from the White House is continuing.

On Sunday, Trump had said that Nato faces a "very bad" future if US allies fail to help open the Strait of Hormuz. In a brief interview with the Financial Times, Trump said that as the US has aided Ukraine in the war with Russia, he expects Europe to help on the Strait of Hormuz. "If there's no response or if it's a negative response I think it will be very bad for the future of Nato," said Trump. Asked about specific help he was looking for, Trump told the FT he wanted minesweepers as well as "people who are going to knock out some bad actors that are along the (Iranian) shore."

Separately, Trump signalled in the interview with the Financial Times "we'd like to know" before he leaves for a late-March summit in Beijing whether China will help secure the strait because of its reliance on Middle Eastern oil, adding: "We may delay." Yet calling off the face-to-face visit with Chinese President Xi Jinping could have its own major economic consequences. In a CNBC interview Monday, treasury secretary Scott Bessent said any delay would not be due to disputes over the strait and explicitly urged investors not to react negatively should Trump put off his trip. "If the meeting for some reason is rescheduled, it would be rescheduled because of logistics," Bessent said from Paris, where he was meeting with Chinese vice premier He Lifeng for trade talks meant to pave the way for the trip. AP

'THIS IS NOT OUR WAR': US ALLIES PUT IT STRAIGHT

Iran has effectively shut the Strait of Hormuz, a narrow passage of water between Iran and Oman, choking off a fifth of global oil supply in the biggest disruption ever. Trump has said that the US is negotiating with countries heavily reliant on West Asia crude to join a coalition to police the waterway. How some of them have responded:

JAPAN | **PM Sanae Takaichi** says no plans to dispatch naval vessels to strait to escort ships. The PM will travel to Washington this week for talks with Trump

AUSTRALIA | Transport minister Catherine King says won't send naval ships as she was not aware of Australia receiving such a request

SOUTH KOREA | Presidential office says they are reviewing the request. Under South Korea's constitution, overseas troop deployments require parliamentary approval

BRITAIN | **PM Keir Starmer** says the UK would not be 'drawn into the wider Iran war', but reiterates he is working with allies to reopen the Strait

EUROPEAN UNION | Foreign ministers to meet Monday to discuss bolstering a small naval mission to West Asia, but are not expected to discuss expanding its role to include the choked-off Strait

GERMANY | Defence minister Boris Pistorius says Germany would not participate with its military in securing the Strait. 'What does (...) Donald Trump expect a handful or two handfuls of European frigates to do in the Strait of Hormuz that the powerful US navy cannot do? This is not our war, we have not started it'

DENMARK | Foreign minister Lars Lokke Rasmussen says it would be wise to keep an open mind to this question

ITALY | Foreign minister Antonio Tajani says there are no naval missions Italy is involved in that can be extended to the area

GREECE | Govt spokesperson says Greece will not engage in military operations in the Strait

Source: Reuters

Oil tankers and cargo ships line up in the Strait of Hormuz as seen from Khor Fakkan, United Arab Emirates

Strait only shut to enemies & those supporting their aggression: Iran

Dubai: Iran has not requested a ceasefire, foreign minister **Abbas Araqchi** said Monday according to the semi-official Students News Network, and wants to ensure that any end to the war with Israel and the US is definitive.

Araqchi said that the Strait of Hormuz is only closed to "enemies and those supporting their aggression". A foreign ministry spokesperson added that states not party to the war have been able to transit their vessels through the strait with coordination and permission from Iran's armed forces.

Araqchi also said some "neighbouring states" hosting US forces and allowing attacks on Iran were also actively encouraging the killing of Iranians. He said hundreds of Iranians, including over 200 children, had been killed in strikes. "Stances should be promptly clarified," he added in a post on X. REUTERS

Stop military ops immediately, China on US call to protect Strait

Beijing: China on Monday called on all countries to immediately stop military operations in West Asia in response to US President Trump's appeal to help keep the Strait of Hormuz open for international transport, ruling out Beijing joining any international naval force risking its close ties with Iran.

China also said it is in talks with the US about Trump's planned visit to Beijing later this month, amid the US president's assertion that he may delay his China trip due to the Iran war.

About Trump's call to China and other countries to join, Chinese foreign ministry spokesperson Lin Jian virtually ruled out Beijing's participation in the naval armada. Instead, he said, "China once again calls on parties to immediately stop military operations, avoid further escalation of the tense situation and prevent regional turmoil from further impacting the global economy." PTI

IRGC threaten to hit US cos in region

Iran's Revolutionary Guards threatened on Monday to target US companies across the region. "Employees of American companies... are requested to leave these areas immediately. These areas will soon be targeted by the Islamic Revolutionary Guard Corps," said the Guards in on their official Sepah News website. The Tasnim news agency last week published a list of potential targets on Telegram that included the offices of Amazon, Google, Microsoft and Nvidia in Gulf countries. AFP

Have plans for next 3 weeks in Iran: Israel

Israeli military spokesperson Lieutenant Colonel Nadav Shoshani told reporters on Monday that there were detailed operational plans for the next three weeks in Iran, and other plans extending further. Israel has said it wants to weaken Iran's capacity to threaten it by striking its security apparatus. "We want to make sure that they are as weak as possible, this regime, and that we degrade all their capabilities, all parts of their security establishment," Shoshani said. REUTERS

Oil prices ease as US says it is fine with some ships passing the Strait

New York: Oil prices eased about 1% on Monday after the US said it would be fine with some Iranian, Indian and Chinese ships moving through the Strait of Hormuz and talk of possible additional releases from emergency reserves as part of global efforts to reduce consumer energy prices during the Iran war.

Brent futures fell $1.46, or 1.4%, to $101.7 a barrel by 8.07pm IST, while US West Texas Intermediate (WTI) crude fell $3.95, or 4%, to $94.76. On Friday, Brent closed at its highest since Aug 2022 and WTI at its highest since July 2022, putting both crude benchmarks up more than 40% since the war broke out. The US is "fine" with some Iranian, Indian and Chinese ships going through the Strait of Hormuz, treasury secretary Scott Bessent said Monday, adding that any action to mitigate higher prices would depend on how long the war lasts. REUTERS

Why Trump may find it hard to reopen Strait of Hormuz

HOW ASIAN COUNTRIES ARE TACKLING SOARING OIL PRICES

Oil prices have soared and share markets have skidded on fears that the war will stoke inflation and crimp economic growth

JAPAN | Releases 80 million barrels of national oil reserves, about 45 days of supply starting Monday; urges Australia, its biggest LNG supplier, to boost output

SOUTH KOREA | Lifts limits on coal-fired power generation capacity, raises nuclear power plant utilisation to 80%

CHINA | Bans refined fuel exports to pre-empt a potential domestic fuel shortage

INDONESIA | Plans to increase amount it has allocated for fuel subsidies to keep prices in check

VIETNAM | To use fuel price stabilisation fund to curb price hikes, asks commercial lenders to extend funding to fuel traders to boost their purchases, warns of reduction in flights from April due to reduced jet fuel imports

Source: **Reuters, AFP**

SRI LANKA | Introduces fuel rationing: motorcycles to get 5 litres/week, cars 15 litres/week, and buses 60 litres/week. Announced 4-day work week, also applicable to schools and universities

NEPAL | Increases petrol and diesel prices by 9.55% and 7% respectively to make payments to suppliers to avoid supply disruption

THAILAND AND PHILIPPINES | Both planning to buy Russian oil. Thailand to freeze cooking gas prices until May, use subsidies to promote use of biodiesel and benzene. Philippines introduces 4-day work week to save energy

A fuel tanker vehicle destroyed in US-Israeli strikes in Tehran

US President Donald Trump has demanded help from allies to reopen the Strait of Hormuz. But even if he can assemble a major coalition it could prove very hard to end Iran's blockade.

Iran lies along one side of the narrow strait and has responded to the US-Israeli attack by using drones, missiles and mines to make the vital waterway unsafe.

Why cut off the Strait now?

When a commander in Iran's Islamic Revolutionary Guard Corps (IRGC) warned in 2011 that cutting off the strait would be "easier than drinking a glass of water", the threat to the strait had already been made many times before. Analysts have always regarded the closure of the strait as a measure of last resort because the move has the potential for retaliation against its own energy sector. The killing of Iran's supreme leader has changed that equation. Iranian officials describe the war as existential.

Why is it so hard to secure?

The Hormuz Strait is a narrow passage of water between Iran and Oman. Shipping lanes are just two nautical miles wide and ships must make a turn opposite Iranian islands and a mountainous coast that provides cover for Iranian forces, according to shipping broker SSY Global. Iran's conventional navy has largely been destroyed but the IRGC still have plenty of options including fast-attack craft, mini submarines, mines and even jet skis packed with explosives, said Tom Sharpe, a retired Royal Navy commander. Tehran has the capacity to produce around 10,000 drones a month, according to Centre for Information Resilience, a research group.

Escorting three or four ships a day through the Strait would be feasible in the short-term using seven or eight destroyers providing air cover, but doing so for months would require more resources, Sharpe said. Even if Iran's capacity to deploy ballistic missiles, drones and floating mines were destroyed, ships would still face a threat from suicide operations, said Adel Bakawan, director of European Institute for Middle East and North African Studies.

What does Trump want?

Trump said on Sunday he expected many countries would send warships and demanded that they do so, adding that his administration was in touch with seven countries about helping. That step came a week after he ordered the US International Development Finance Corporation to provide insurance and guarantees for shipping companies.

What are other chokepoints?

Yemen's Houthis, a group allied with Iran but with a far smaller military arsenal at their disposal, shut down most traffic passing through the Red Sea for more than two years despite US and EU naval efforts. Most shipping companies are still using a far longer route via the southern tip of Africa. An EU-led force has been more successful at countering piracy off Somalia's coast, but that has been against forces far less well-equipped than IRGC.

Are there alternatives?

The UAE and Saudi Arabia have sought to find ways to bypass the strait by building more oil pipelines. But those are not currently operational and an attack on an east-west Saudi pipeline by Houthi militia in 2019 showed those alternatives were also vulnerable. REUTERS

Netanyahu alive, video at cafe is not AI-fabricated: Israel's envoy to India

TIMES NEWS NETWORK

Israeli ambassador to India Reuven Azar on Monday rebutted claims that PM Benjamin Netanyahu was dead, while reiterating that the "operational opportunity" for the Israel-US joint strikes on Iran arose only after PM Narendra Modi left Israel on Feb 26. PM Modi had visited Israel days before the attacks and his bilateral meeting with Netanyahu took place 48 hours before the Feb 28 strikes that were quickly followed by Iranian reprisals.

"PM Netanyahu is alive. I saw him when I was in Israel more than once. The video at the cafe (showing Netanyahu) is not AI-fabricated. A lot of disinformation is being spread," Azar said, accusing Iran of spreading false information.

"Look, this is a classical disinformation projection that the Iranians and their accomplices are trying to do. Our PM is feeling very well. I met him personally following PM Narendra Modi's visit (to Israel). He's completely intact. He also showed that yesterday in a video when he visited a cafe in Israel. So don't worry, he's okay," he said addressing reporters.

Reuters

A screengrab taken from a video released by Israeli PM Benjamin Netanyahu claiming to be at a cafe in Jerusalem on Sunday

Not for the first time, the ambassador denied that PM Modi may have been aware of the attack on Iran as he had visited Israel just before it took place. "It was evident that the situation is very volatile in our region even before PM Narendra Modi came. When it comes to the decision to strike, the operational opportunity came only after PM Modi left. The cabinet decision to approve the operation happened only two days after," Azar said.

Bibi posts another video

A day after releasing a video debunking conspiracy theories of his death, Netanyahu on Monday came up with yet another video 'showing he is alive'. In the video shared on his personal X account, Netanyahu is seen interacting with people in the Jerusalem Hills. In Monday's video, Netanyahu is seen near the same coffee shop featured in the earlier clip and is wearing the same outfit.

With PTI inputs

Dubai suspends foreign airlines' flights

TIMES NEWS NETWORK

Dubai on Monday evening "suspended until further notice" all flights operated by foreign airlines.

The decision came after a fire in a fuel tank near Dubai International Airport on a day that had seen multiple attacks disrupting flights.

IndiGo said on X Monday night: "As per the latest update issued by Dubai Airport authorities, landing permissions for aircraft operating into DXB have been suspended until further notice in view of the prevailing situation in the region."

Monday was particularly bad for Dubai. In the morning, flights at Dubai International Airport (DXB) were put on hold after a drone attack on a fuel tank near the airport. "Flights are holding, diverting to DWC (Dubai's secondary airport) if already near DXB, or diverting to alternate airfields," flight tracking site Flightradar24 stated Monday morning.

At that time, many flights headed to Dubai returned to their origins. After this, airlines — including Indian carriers — cancelled their flights to Dubai on Monday. Dubai is the biggest destination for Indian air carriers. TNN

AFP

AFP

Smoke rises from an ongoing fire near Dubai International Airport on Monday as an Emirates aircraft prepares for landing

'Mojtaba names Guards' ex-chief as military adviser'

Tehran: Iran's new supreme leader has appointed the former chief of the Revolutionary Guards as a military adviser, local media reported on Monday. "General Mohsen Rezaei was appointed as military adviser by the order of commander-in-chief Ayatollah Mojtaba Khamenei," Mehr news agency reported. Other media also reported the appointment. Rezaei, 71, previously headed the Islamic Revolutionary Guard Corps, the ideological arm of Iran's military. On Monday, the new supreme leader issued a statement saying officials and heads of state institutions appointed under his father should "continue to carry on with their work". AFP

Israel steps up Lebanon strikes, Iran missile intercepted in Old Jerusalem

Beirut: The war in West Asia raged on multiple fronts on Monday, as the US and Israel pummelled military targets in Iran's capital, Israel stepped up its campaign against Iran-backed militants in Lebanon and Iran retaliated with a drone strike that temporarily forced the closure of Dubai's airport.

Massive explosions were heard in Beirut as Israel launched new attacks on the Lebanese capital before dawn, saying it was striking infrastructure related to the Iran-linked Hezbollah militia group. The Israeli army has issued evacuation orders for many neighbourhoods in Beirut as well as southern Lebanon.

AFP

Israeli soldiers gather on the border with Lebanon in the Upper Galilee

Israel's strikes have displaced more than 800,000 Lebanese from large swaths of the country's southern region and its capital's southern suburbs, and some 850 people have been killed in Lebanon. Some Israeli troops have pushed into southern Lebanon, and there are fears that Israel is preparing a large-scale invasion. In southern Lebanon, seven people were killed in Israeli airstrikes, according to authorities and reports.

Not long after Israel's military announced it had launched new strikes on Tehran, explosions were heard in the Iranian capital and outlying areas. More details were not immediately available. More than 1,300 people have been killed in Iran so far, according to the Iranian Red Crescent.

Israel has carried out some 7,600 strikes on Iran so far, knocking out 85% of its air defences and 70% of Iran's missile launchers, military spokesman Lt Col Nadav Shoshani told reporters Monday. In Israel, 12 people have been killed by Iranian missile fire. At least 13 US military members have been killed. He said that Iran was firing far fewer missiles at Israel than the military had contended with at other times in the past two years of regional wars. He added that he was not aware of any "urgent problem" with the stock of interceptors, adding that Israel had prepared for a "larger threat".

In Israel, an intercepted Iranian missile attack sprayed shrapnel through Jerusalem's Old City, hitting the rooftop Greek Orthodox Patriarchate. No injuries were reported. AP

DAILY PLANET

Af man who worked with US military dies after he is taken into ICE custody

An Afghan immigrant whose family said had worked with US forces in his home country died at a Texas hospital after having been detained by immigration authorities, according to officials. Mohommad Nazeer Paktyawal, 41, died at Parkland Hospital in Dallas on Saturday, a day after having been taken into custody by US Immigration and Customs Enforcement or ICE. A cause of death is still pending. But Paktyawal's family said he was not ill. "We still cannot understand how this happened. He was only 41 years old and was a strong and healthy man. His children keep asking when their father will come home," the family said.

Kazakhstan's new constitution approved

A new constitution that strengthens President Kassym-Jomart Tokayev's grip on power in Kazakhstan, Central Asia's largest country, has won overwhelming approval in a referendum, according to preliminary results released Monday. The country's central election commission announced that over 87% of respondents in Sunday's vote supported the constitutional changes that merge the Kazakhstani parliament's two chambers into one and give the president the right to appoint key govt officials with parliament's approval, including the restoration of the post of vice president. The turnout exceeded 73%.

WH chief of staff Susie Wiles has breast cancer

Susie Wiles, the first woman to serve as White House chief of staff, has been diagnosed with early-stage breast cancer but will continue working, President Donald Trump said on Monday. Wiles, 68, has been a constant presence at Trump's side since he returned to office in Jan 2025. Republicans have credited her with bringing greater discipline to the White House. "Her strength and her commitment to continue doing the job she loves, and does so well, while undergoing treatment, tells you everything you need to know about her," Trump said.

TIMES SPORT

THE TIMES OF INDIA, BENGALURU | TUESDAY, MARCH 17, 2026

EX-ENG DEFENDER ASHLEY COLE TAKES ON FIRST MANAGERIAL ROLE WITH ITALIAN CLUB CESENA

NOVAK DJOKOVIC WITHDRAWS FROM MIAMI OPEN DUE TO RIGHT SHOULDER INJURY

Self-doubts, a 30-sec hug, immense love & universe's plans

Samson Relives The Spiritual Experience Of Winning World Cup

Rayson.Tennyson@timesofindia.com

Thiruvananthapuram: For someone who was looked at as dispensable not too long ago, Sanju Samson is suddenly in demand. One day, he is addressing conclaves and attending awards in New Delhi, the next day, he is flying back home to Thiruvanthapuram for an event. Just like the team desperately wanted him back as an opener, to break the stranglehold that off-spinners were having on the left-handers, everyone wants Samson. He will soon jet off to Chennai for IPL duties with the Chennai Super Kings. Describing the epochal victory as far more than just a sporting milestone, Samson called the win a deeply "spiritual experience."

Big words for someone who is looked at as a happy-go-lucky character and, by his own admission, "not very emotional".

For Samson, one of the most memorable moments at the World Cup came quietly inside the dressing room after India's crucial Super Eights win over the West Indies. "After the win against the West Indies, I created a spiritual place of my own in the dressing room and also offered a personal prayer," Samson told reporters at an event here.

PTI

LOCAL LEGEND: Sanju Samson in Thiruvananthapuram

Feel The Thrill was the tag line of the event, and the tournament did deliver some of the usual T20 thrills — explosive powerplays, nerve-wracking death overs and packed stadiums heaving to the chants of "Indiaaaaa, Indiaaaaa!" No wonder, then, Samson feels the experience went beyond cricket.

"It was a spiritual moment. When you win something as big as the World Cup with your country, it feels like something greater than just sport."

The road to redemption, though, was typically rocky for Samson. In the lead-up to the tournament, he battled self-doubt and uncertainty. But as things approached the business end of the event, his confidence grew with each match, eventually emerging as the Player of the Tournament.

"I wasn't very confident when I left home to play in the World Cup, but the universe had other plans," he said. "The 97 not out against the West Indies was the most important innings for me because I had to stay calm even as wickets kept falling at the other end."

Samson also recalled an emotional moment after the final with India's head coach Gautam Gambhir, one of the keeper-batter's biggest backers. "Gauti *bhai* and I share a close relationship. He didn't say much... he just hugged me for about 30 seconds. That was enough," Samson said.

Samson is excited about the next chapter of his career with the CSK, where he will share the dressing room with MS Dhoni. The opportunity to learn from the 'Captain Cool,' he said, is something he is eagerly awaiting.

"I have spoken with Mahi *bhai* a lot and have seen him on and off in the Indian team. But this will be the first time we spend two months together. There is a lot of excitement," Samson explained.

Interestingly, his first match in the yellow jersey will come against his former franchise, the Rajasthan Royals. "On the field, I don't allow emotions to take over. I will always give my best for the team I represent," he added.

For Samson, however, the motivation goes beyond trophies and statistics. Every time he steps onto the field, he says he carries the dreams of countless youngsters from small towns who hope to see someone like them succeed on cricket's grandest stage.

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T20 WC HAT-TRICK, OLY GOLD ON SURYA'S RADAR

India's T20I Captain Says The Bedrock Of The Recent Title Triumph Is Down To Deliberate Policy Of Minimal Selection Changes & Unflinching Trust In Settled Group Of Players

TIMES NEWS NETWORK

New Delhi: There's a particular kind of hunger that doesn't disappear with winning. If anything, it sharpens. Indian men's T20I captain Suryakumar Yadav knows this. At the BCCI Naman Awards here Sunday, freshly crowned as the captain who just handed India its third ICC title in the space of two extraordinary years, Surya was already looking ahead — past the confetti, past the celebration — to 2028.

Three back-to-back T20 World Cup titles. And an Olympic gold while they're at it.

"It's a great thing that the big event is happening, and cricket is getting an entry into that. It will be a special thing. There are two big events in that year (2028). There's a T20 World Cup as well, and the Olympics as well. So why not? If you have done two in a row, why not three in a row as far as T20 World Cup is concerned. And definitely the Olympic gold," Surya said at the awards ceremony.

Just like that. The arithmetic of ambition, stated plainly, without theatrical pause.

To understand what has shifted in Indian cricket, you have to go back to Barbados. June 2024. The night Rohit Sharma's men finally broke an eleven-year wait for an ICC title and lifted the 2024 T20 World Cup. Something fundamental changed that evening – not just in the trophy cabinet but somewhere deeper — in the way the current group of players understood what they were capable of.

Surya called it a taste. It's perhaps the most precise word for it. "I think we just needed that one spark or one step, which we actually crossed in 2024 and post that 2025 Champions Trophy, then women's team winning the ODI World Cup in 2025 and now defending the men's T20 WC title. I think that one step was important; that taste was important for everyone to understand what it takes to win an ICC trophy. But now, there's no looking back. If this wonderful thing has started, let's try and collect as many as possible."

SKY on Test cricket!

"I would love to (play Tests) because I played red ball cricket from 2010-11 to 2020. So, 10 years is a long time to play red ball, and I was in love with that format. Obviously given an opportunity, who wouldn't want to play Test?"

Surya also said the bedrock of the recent title triumph was down to a deliberate policy of minimal selection changes and unflinching trust in a settled group of players.

"It was not that difficult. I think from where we left in 2024 under Rahul sir, from then, we knew that we needed to show a lot of trust and belief in the players. Because you see, sometimes in sport, you won't see good things happening around. There'll be lots of ups and downs, but then you have to show a lot of trust in players, belief in them."

Surya also credited Gautam Gambhir — "Gauti bhai" — for the clarity of vision he provided to the team. The phrase that echoed through team meetings was simple and stubborn: "we've built a super team, we've picked a super team, so let's stick to them."

"When you come into a big tournament like the World Cup, I think it's really important to stand by the players who've done really well for you. So, you've got to stick with them through thick and thin."

PTI

LOOKING AHEAD: Suryakumar Yadav after winning the T20 World Cup

'U-19 WC final ton above IPL century'

Mandakini.Shalya
@timesofindia.com

Jaipur: Vaibhav Sooryavanshi has heard the warnings. Stay focused. Don't get swept up. Keep your head down. Since making his Rajasthan Royals debut last year at 13, the advice has followed him everywhere and by his own admission, it's finally starting to stick.

SOORYAVANSHI

"I am focusing more on my work," the 14-year-old said at a Royals event here on Monday. "Whenever you perform well in any field or reach a good position, you are bound to get attention. It is up to you how you handle it and how you manage it. So, I mostly try to focus on my game. Also, there are regular matches coming up, so I'm occupied there."

For a teenager navigating stardom at a pace most adults would find overwhelming, that kind of composure is telling. The runs have piled up across formats and tournaments, the hype has intensified, and yet the Bihar-born left-hander appears remarkably unbothered. "Learning", as he puts it, to "let his game do the talking".

If you want to understand what truly gives him the "deepest satisfaction and greatest source of pride" in his fledgling career, don't ask about the IPL hundred that he smashed last year. Ask about Harare.

In the 2026 Under-19 World Cup final against England, Sooryavanshi walked out and produced one of the most devastating knocks in the tournament's history — 175 off 80 balls, laced with 15 fours and 15 sixes, powering India to a massive total of 411 and a 100-run victory, the largest winning margin in U-19 World Cup final history as India claimed its sixth title.

"My personal favourite would have to be from the Under-19 World Cup that we played. I played a significant innings in the finals and that is very special to me. Even though I had scored a hundred in my first IPL season, the World Cup was a unique experience for me as you can play only one U-19 WC, and I contributed to the team's victory. That knock remains very special to me," Sooryavanshi said.

Sooryavanshi targets Gayle's highest score record

At the BCCI Naman Awards in the Capital on Sunday, Sooryavanshi made no secret of where his ambitions lie in the IPL. He want to break Chris Gayle's 175 not out, the highest individual score in men's T20 cricket anywhere in the world.

'Winning 2027 ODI WC is ultimate goal'

TIMES NEWS NETWORK

New Delhi: There's a date Shubman Gill can't forget. November 19, 2023. A packed Narendra Modi Stadium in Ahmedabad roaring for India in the ODI World Cup final they were expected to win. And then, they didn't.

More than two years later, that night still lives rent-free in his head. Importantly, he's not trying to evict it.

"The 2023 World Cup final in Ahmedabad. I would love to replay that and win it for India. Definitely," Gill said at the BCCI Naman Awards here Sunday, where he picked up the Polly Umrigar Award for Best International Men's Cricketer of the Year. The words came without hesitation. No diplomatic deflection. Just a man who knows exactly what still stings.

India had been untouchable through that tournament. Ten games, ten wins. Then came the final, and Australia. And just like that, the trophy that had felt inevitable slipped away. For a generation of Indian fans, and clearly for Gill himself, it left a mark that results since haven't fully covered over.

@ShubmanGill

Shubman Gill poses with BCCI's Best International Cricketer (Men) award for the 2024–25 season on Sunday

But here's what's different now. There's another crack at it. The 2027 ODI World Cup heads to South Africa, Zimbabwe and Namibia in Oct-Nov next year, and Gill — now leading the ODI side — is already thinking about winning the title.

"Definitely, that is the ultimate goal," Gill said. "We felt like we were so close last time in 2023 when we were in the final in India. To be able to get another crack at it in South Africa, it's going to be a great opportunity for us."

He paused, then added something that tells you everything about where his head is. "Winning a World Cup in any format for the country is the ultimate goal. So obviously, that is something that sometimes keeps running in my mind."

The award night itself was a moment worth savouring. Gill had a stellar season as captain of India's ODI and Test teams, despite missing out on the recent T20 World Cup victory. "Many greats and legends of Indian cricket have received it before, so it is a huge honour for me to be here."

Mumbai Indians begin preparatory camp

Mumbai: Five-time champions Mumbai Indians on Monday began training for the upcoming season of the Indian Premier League, which will start on March 28.

Shardul Thakur, Mayank Markande, Allah Ghazanfar, Naman Dhir, Raja Angad Bawa, Robin Minz, Raghu Sharma, Mayank Rawat, Danish Malewar, Mohammad Izhar and Ashwani Kumar were the first group of players to arrive for training. The remainder of the squad, which includes the likes of Rohit Sharma, Jasprit Bumrah and skipper Hardik Pandya, is expected to join the camp in the coming days as preparations build in intensity ahead of the tournament.

IPL 2026

"There's always something special about the first day of pre-season. You see the players walk in, the energy builds, and the objective is to start strong. We've got the boys who know this franchise inside out, and we have got some exciting new faces coming in," MI head coach **Mahela Jayawardene** said.

Mumbai Indians/X

The session opened with a structured fitness and conditioning block, with the strength and conditioning team putting players through their paces with movement drills, agility work, and fitness assessments. MI will open their 2026 campaign against Kolkata Knight Riders on March 29 at the Wankhede Stadium. PTI

No place for hubris in sport: Duplantis

Mondo unruffled by fears of his winning run coming to an end. "I never really had that problem," he tells TOI

Rohan.Alvares
@timesofindia.com

Mumbai: Fresh from breaking the world record for the 15th time, pole vault superstar Mondo Duplantis is excited about returning to the scene where his extraordinary sequence began. Torun, a city in north-central Poland, will host the world indoors from March 20-22. It's also where Duplantis etched his name in the record books for the first time in Feb 2020, representing a full-circle moment for an exceptionally gifted athlete who has absolutely dominated his sport in these six years. "Torun is a very special place for me since I broke my first world record there," the two-time reigning Olympic champion told reporters during a call on Sunday. "I've been fortunate enough to break a few since then, but the first one's always a very life-changing moment.

"You go from, in one instance, being not the world record holder, to the world record holder, which is one of my biggest childhood dreams. "I'm just really excited for it, honestly, especially after what I was able to do just now in Uppsala, which was, of course, really good."

If you missed out on Duplantis's latest feat, the 26-year-old cleared the bar at 6.31m at his home meet, the Mondo Classic, last Thursday. It saw him extend his iron-clad grip on the world record he's held since eclipsing Frenchman Renaud Lavillenie's previous mark with a jump of 6.17m six years ago.

The three-time indoor and outdoor world champion explained how tweaking his run-up by a couple of steps had played a key role in helping him control a stiffer pole while going for the 6.31m vault. "There was this one stiffer pole that I'd never been able to really just get to work," he said. "I just couldn't really make it work at the weight that I like to jump at. And so I was able to make it work this past weekend.

"I did a little bit of a change with my approach and my run-up. I usually run from a 20-step approach and I moved it to a 22 step approach, which doesn't sound like that much of a difference, but it's actually quite different.

Getty Images

HAPPY RETURNS: Mondo Duplantis will be back at the Arena Torun, the venue where he first broke the pole vault record, this week

"I don't have speed data, but I think that I was clearly able to add some type of extra energy into the take-off because I was able to use that stiffer pole that I haven't been able to use for like four years."

For someone who has won 38 straight competitions, with defeat last coming in Aug 2023, Duplantis was asked if he fears that his incredible streak would come to an end. "I never really had that problem," said the Swede. "I think you can never have too much of a hubris and be overconfident when it comes to sports, and you can just never underestimate your opponents but also the sport itself.

"I know that whenever I do the things that I know that I can do, and I focus and I jump the way that I know that I can jump, then I do feel like I'm the best one every time I step out onto the track."

But in "such a difficult sport", Duplantis stressed, "there's no slacking off". "Especially at this level, it's like I just always have to bring my A game. I never feel like it's just given to me," he said.

As to how further, or higher, he could still go, Duplantis said the thrill for him simply lay in "the journey" and "pushing the envelope" as long as he was competing.

"I just expect a certain level out of whatever I think is possible on the day, so I'll just keep pushing it, and as far as I can take it, then that'll be what it'll be," he said.

India set to host F1, WRC events soon

Archiman.Bhaduri
@timesofindia.com

Kolkata: Motorsports in the country is set to get a fillip after a recent meeting between sports minister Dr Mansukh Mandaviya and Federation of Motor Sports Clubs of India (FMSCI) president Arindam Ghosh along with its council members Vicky Chandhok and Tamal Ghoshal. "We had a very positive and fruitful discussion with the honourable minister," Ghosh told **TOI.**

The former rallyist is impressed at the way the government has taken keen interest in reviving the lost glory of motorsport.

"The minister was clear in his message that 'we need to do it'. India is eager to bring Formula 1 along with other motorsports events back and the minister assured us all help in this regard," Ghosh stated.

However, the FMSCI president is optimistic of staging a World Rally Championship (WRC) leg in the country before F1. "I think WRC can come here much earlier where we will be able to see Indian drivers participating," he said.

Pragg, Vaishali, Divya confirm Candidates participation

TIMES NEWS NETWORK

Pune/Nagpur: Although Konery Humpy has conveyed her strong reservations about playing in the World Championship Candidates chess tournament in Cyprus starting on March 29, the other three Indians have reconfirmed their participation.

RB Ramesh, mentor to both R Praggnanandhaa and R Vaishali, stated that the siblings will play the eight-player double round robin tournament in respective sections despite safety concerns due to attacks by USA and Israel on Iran and the subsequent disturbance of peace in other West Asian countries. The tournament venue is about 400-km away from Israel.

Divya's mother Dr Namrata Deshmukh confirmed that the Women's World Cup winner, who has qualified for the Candidates tournament, will reach Cyprus before the tournament. The world governing body Fide has stated that there is no reason to change either the schedule or the venue of the tournament.

Humpy told **TOI** that her concerns about the safety and uncertainty remain and she reserves the right to withdraw from the event. "FIDE is refusing to change their stance," she said. When asked if she has been given a deadline to reconfirm her participation, she said revealing that part is FIDE's prerogative. Till the time of going to press, FIDE didn't respond to TOI's message.

TOI

Koneru Humpy may pull out from the Candidates meet

The regulations of the Women's Candidates state that the best unqualified player/s from the rankings of FIDE women's events 2024-25 will act as replacement player/s in case of withdrawal/s.

Should Humpy withdraw, her place is likely to be taken by No. 9 Anna Muzychuk of Ukraine.

The Candidates tournaments, with financial commitments at the government level, are FIDE's flagship events. The winners of these events will get a chance to challenge reigning champions in either section, D Gukesh (open) and Ju Wenjun (women's), for the respective world crowns.

FIDE did not postpone the 2020 Candidates tournament at Yekaterinburg in Russia despite the Covid outbreak, inconveniencing many players and prompting the withdrawal of Teimour Radjabov. The tournament had to be halted after seven rounds as the Russian government announced a ban on air traffic from all countries due to the pandemic. The tournament, used to be held only in the Open section then, resumed 13 months later.

Ian Nepomniachtchi won it and earned the right to challenge Magnus Carlsen. FIDE started to host the eight-player Candidates tournaments concurrently with the 2024 edition in Canada. Both sections consist of eight players each who qualify through various routes.

SNAP SHOTS

Djokovic withdraws from Miami Open

Novak Djokovic has withdrawn from the Miami Open with a right shoulder injury, organisers said on Sunday. The 24-time Grand Slam champion reached the fourth round at Indian Wells this week, but the six-time Miami champion opted out of the second leg of the "Sunshine Double" -- where he fell to Jakub Mensik in last year's final. At Indian Wells he played with a compression sleeve on his right arm, telling Tennis Channel he was dealing with a forearm injury that was intermittently affecting his serve.

Bhatia finishes T-13: Akshay Bhatia ended tied 13th at the Players Championship, marking another steady outing on the PGA Tour, while first-round co-leader Sahith Theegala slipped to tied 32nd. Bhatia, carded 2-under 70 to gain 13 positions on the final day and move into the top 15 and just outside the Top-10. Meanwhile, Cameron Young carded 4-under 68 to clinch the title. Among Indian origin players, the Indo-Canadian player Sudarshan Yellamaraju had his career best result this week as he finished T-5 after carding 4-under 68 to take his total for the week to 9-under par.

Pak appoint Batch as coach: The Pakistan Hockey Federation has appointed Australian Colin Batch as the new head coach of the national side ahead of this year's FIH men's World Cup. Batch replaces interim head coach Khawaja Junaid, who had travelled with the team to Egypt for the recent FIH World Cup qualifying tournament, where Pakistan lost the final to England but booked a place in the main rounds after eight years.

Chelsea fined, given suspended ban: Chelsea have been fined a record total of 10.75 million pounds for breaches of the Premier League's rules relating to financial reporting, third-party investment and youth development, the league said on Monday. The club has also been hit with a one-year first team transfer ban, suspended for two years, as well as an immediate nine-month academy transfer ban.

Laporta re-elected as Barca president: Joan Laporta has been re-elected as Barcelona president after winning over 68 percent of the vote and will begin his second consecutive term, and fourth overall, from July 1, the club said on Sunday.

Knicks prevail: Jalen Brunson scored 30 points and added nine assists for the host New York Knicks, who mounted their biggest comeback of the season and edged the undermanned Golden State Warriors 110-107 on Sunday night. **Results:** Oklahoma City 116 bt Minnesota 103; Toronto 119 bt Detroit 108; Dallas 130 bt Cleveland 120; Milwaukee 134 bt Indiana 123; Philadelphia 109 bt Portland 103; New York 110 bt Golden State 107; Sacramento 116 bt Utah 111.

Govt greenlights IPL at Chinnaswamy

RCB To Stay At Home; Tournament To Be Hosted Under SOPs

Chitrangada.C@timesofindia.com

Syed Asif

GEARING UP: All the entry gates have been widened at the M Chinnaswamy Stadium to comply with the recommendations of the Justice D'Cunha report

Bengaluru: After months of uncertainty following the stampede during Royal Challengers Bengaluru's (RCB) maiden IPL victory celebrations on June 4 last year in which 11 fans were killed, M Chinnaswamy Stadium is all set to host the defending champions again after the state govt gave the all-clear for IPL 2026 matches at the venue.

The Expert Committee constituted by the govt had conducted a final inspection of the stadium premises on Friday.

On Monday, following a meeting chaired by Karnataka home minister G Parameshwara at the Vidhana Soudha, with the Expert Committee and representatives of KSCA, RCB and DNA, the govt issued the formal go-ahead for hosting matches at Chinnaswamy.

DECKS CLEARED

The Karnataka State Cricket Association has been asked to follow the SoPs issued by the state govt last year.

The 19th edition of the tournament will get under way on March 28 with RCB hosting Sunrisers Hyderabad in Bengaluru. The stadium is also slated to host the opening ceremony apart from the RCB Unboxing event, which is likely to be held on March 21.

In a media statement, KSCA said: "During the meeting, the Expert Committee outlined the preparedness and compliance measures undertaken at Chinnaswamy Stadium. Based on its recommendations and after reviewing the arrangements in detail, the home minister formally granted approval for the conduct of upcoming IPL matches at the iconic stadium."

The statement added: "The entire KSCA team has worked closely with the home minister, the chief minister, the deputy chief minister, Expert Committee, Expert Sub-committee, other ministers, senior state govt officials and all statutory authorities to ensure full compliance with the recommendations of the Expert Committee."

Key SOPs

- Police units and stakeholder departments will be responsible for crowd management.
- Event organisers must submit a comprehensive application (Form 1 & 2) along with a detailed Crowd Management Plan.
- Applications without mandatory NoCs from traffic police, fire safety department, health department, venue owner and structural safety certification agency (PWD/BBMP/local bodies) will be rejected.
- Decision on the application (approval or rejection) must be taken within three days of submission.

MEDICAL & EMERGENCY PREPAREDNESS

First Aid Posts: Minimum one per 10,000 spectators, located every 500–1,000 metres in open venues.

Ambulances: To be stationed at multiple strategic points.

- Minimum 1 Advance Life Support (ALS) ambulance per 25,000 persons.
- Minimum 1 Basic Life Support (BLS) ambulance per 10,000 persons.

Target evacuation time: 10 minutes.

Medical stations/field hospitals: For crowds above 50,000, at least one field hospital or mini trauma centre per 50,000 spectators, linked to tertiary hospitals.

- Mobile first-aid teams must patrol the venue area.

Evacuation corridors: Maintain 1.5–2 metre clear lane per 100 metres of crowd frontage, reserved exclusively for emergency movement

Doping scare at jumps meet, syringes found

Biju.BabuCyriac@timesofindia.com

Bengaluru: Despite continued efforts by the Athletics Federation of India and the National Anti-Doping Agency (NADA), the use of banned performance-enhancing drugs persists among some of the country's top athletes and promising youngsters. The latest evidence emerged at the 5th National Open Jumps competition, which concluded here on Sunday.

According to sources, several syringes and vials allegedly used for doping were found in the restrooms used by athletes at the venue, located on the outskirts of the city. "NADA officials were present during the meet and were conducting routine checks, but they went on high alert after syringes were found in the toilets," a source told TOI. "Many of the bottles had labels in Russian language, pointing to the use of banned substances. One label in English was almost entirely peeled off, but it was still possible to make out that it was a mephentermine injection — a prohibited stimulant under WADA rules," the source added. NADA officials were alerted about the findings on the first day of the competition. Organisers subsequently put up posters outside the restrooms warning athletes: "Do not take any syringes inside the toilet. Our volunteers are watching you," a poster, which also had the same message in Hindi, read.

ATHLETICS

A coach said the warning had an immediate impact, with the number of syringes recovered falling sharply on the second day. Another senior coach present at the venue struck a cautionary note and said, "Some senior athletes are encouraging juniors to use banned substances. We need to create greater awareness among young athletes, so they do not look for shortcuts to success."

India topped the 2024 WADA Testing Figures report with 260 adverse analytical findings from 7,113 samples tested — a positivity rate of 3.6 per cent, the highest among all major nations. France ranked second in absolute numbers with 91 cases from 11,744 tests, but at a far lower positivity rate of 0.8 per cent. Russia recorded 76 positives from 10,514 tests, a rate of 0.7 per cent. China, which conducted more than three times India's volume of tests — 24,214 samples — returned just 110 positive cases, a rate of 0.2 per cent.

Ayush, Tanvi to lead Indian challenge

Orleans (France): Youngsters Ayush Shetty and Tanvi Sharma will lead India's challenge at the USD 250,000 Orleans Masters Super 300 badminton tournament beginning here on Tuesday after senior shuttler HS Prannoy pulled out due to a shoulder injury.

Prannoy, who was originally slated to face top seed Chou Tien Chen of Chinese Taipei in the opening round, was forced to withdraw after experiencing shoulder pain during the Swiss Open last week. While the cause of his discomfort was unclear initially, the Indian had decided to pull out of his match against Japan's Koki Watanabe to avoid aggravating the injury. While Prannoy will miss the event, the rest of the Indian contingent will look to make a deep run in the tournament.

BADMINTON

All eyes will be on eighth seed and world No. 25 Ayush Shetty, who opens his campaign against Lee Chia Hao of Chinese Taipei. Former world No. 1 Kidambi Srikanth will face Denmark's Magnus Johannesen. Tharun Mannepalli takes on Chinese Taipei's Wang Tzu Wei. PTI

'Home-grown coaches need of hour'

Arnab.Seal@timesofindia.com

TOI

Kolkata: Even as the Indian men's and women's teams continue to grow and flourish under two foreign coaches, Craig Fulton and Sjored Marijne, Hockey India president Dilip Tirkey is looking to the future and hoping to prepare home-grown coaches who will be able to better handle the junior and then the senior teams.

Speaking exclusively to TOI, Tirkey said, "We are planning to either send a group of coaches abroad or get someone from outside to come and train them so that they are well prepared to take charge of the Indian teams in the coming days." While the final list may contain a lot more names, for now Tirkey wants the likes of PR Sreejesh, Rani Rampal, Sardara Singh, Deepak Thakur, Shanmugham P and Vickram Kanth to be part of the training process.

HOCKEY

Among these names, Sreejesh has tasted the biggest success as a coach helping the Indian junior men's team bag a bronze in the junior World Cup held in Chennai-Madurai in December last year.

Rampal and Thakur were both in Women's HIL working with Soorma Hockey Club and Shrachi Bengal Tigers respectively, while Vickram was the assistant coach of Tamil Nadu Dragons in men's HIL and is part of FIH coaches' programme. "We also want drag flickers and goalkeepers, who are interested in taking up coaching as a career, to be part of the process," Tirkey further added.

WOMEN'S TEAM TO PLAY NATIONS CUP IN JUNE: After qualifying for the World Cup to be held in Belgium and the Netherlands later this year, the Indian women's hockey team will have to shift their focus to the Nations Cup that will be held from June 15-21.

The tournament will see India competing with hosts New Zealand besides the USA, Japan, Korea, Chile, Scotland and France. Considering the opponents, it will be quite a challenge for the women's team as they look to make it back into FIH Pro League after being relegated last year. To better prepare for the tournament, the team will travel to the US and Argentina next month.

Ugandans Kibet and Sarah headline elite list

TOP STARS: Kibet (left) and Sarah

Bengaluru: World Juniors finalist Ugandans Harbert Kibet and women's defending champion Sarah Chelangat will headline the elite field at the 18th edition of the TCS World 10K Bengaluru on April 26.

The 20-year-old Kibet made his debut in the 10K earlier this year, winning in the Spanish town of Castellon with a world-leading 26:39s, which is the sixth-fastest time ever. Kibet is one of the five athletes entered with a sub-27 time this year. A total of 11 athletes with personal bests faster than the Bengaluru course record of 27:38 are also in the fray at the World Athletics Gold Label Race which offers $26,000 for the winners in the men's and women's section.

WORLD 10K

Kibet is expected to face strong challenge from Ethiopian Khairi Bejiga (26:51) and Rodrigue Kwizera of Burundi, who claimed silver here two years back and Gemechu Dida, also from Ethiopia, who bagged second at the RAK half marathon last year. "It is my first time in India, and in the TCS World 10K Bengaluru, I want the most out of it as I am in tremendous form", Kibet said in a release from race promoters Procam International. Also in the fray would be Tadese Worku, who bagged the silver in 2022 and two-time world 5000m champion Muktar Edris.

CHELANGAT BIDS FOR DOUBLE

Meanwhile, Sarah will look to emulate Agnes Tirop who won the title in 2018 and 19. Last year, the Ugandan won in 31:07s. "TCS World 10K Bengaluru is close to my heart, and I would like to triumph another time in this beautiful city", Sarah said.

Challenging Sarah would be Brenda Jepchirchir, who clocked 29:25 at Valencia and 2024 Bengaluru champion Lilian Rengeruk Kasait. World steeplechase record-holder Beatrice Chepkoech is also headed to compete in the prestigious World 10K. Cintia Chepngeno, the silver winner here last year in 32:04s, will also be in action. TNN

Bhandage stars in AGORC victory

Bengaluru: Manoj Bhandage stole the limelight with a blistering unbeaten century to power AGORC to a comfortable eight-wicket victory over Railway Institute South, Hubballi in the KSCA Group II (Div I) league-cum-knockout tournament here recently.

Asked to bat, Railway Institute rode on Madan Krishna's half-century to post 146/8 in 20 overs. While seven batters registered single-digit scores, skipper Madan waged a lone battle with a 36-ball 72 to help Railway Institute reach a respectable total. Darshan MR led the attack for AGORC as he ripped through the lineup with a four wicket haul. He was aptly supported by Sunil Kumar, who picked up two wickets.

KSCA TOURNEY

In reply, AGORC chased down the target in 12.3 overs for the loss of two wickets. Although both openers departed early - with AGORC struggling at 31/2 in 3.5 overs, Bhandage starred with the bat as he smashed seven boundaries and ten sixes in his 36-ball 101 help AGORC canter home.

Brief scores: Railway Institute South, Hubballi: 146/8 in 20 overs (Madan Krishna 72; Sunil Kumar 2-20, Darshan MR 4-16) lost to **AGORC: 147/2 in 12.3 overs** (Manoj Bhandage 101n.o (36b; 7x4; 10x6)).

DELL CC: 171/6 in 20 overs (Vinay Radha 32, Sachin Gankal 30; Dhanu 32n.o; Suresh Karani 2-31) lost to **Central Excise & Customs: 172/6 in 19.3 overs** (Rohan RR 54, Samarth R 43, Thippa Reddy 35n.o; Rajesh Ayyakannu 2-27, Aevant Khothari 2-29). TNN

City Have A Mountain To Climb Against 15-Time Champions

GET REAL!

Reuters

FIRST-LEG HERO: Fede Valverde (R) scored a first-half hat-trick against Man City

Manchester: How do you prepare to overturn a 3-0 deficit to the mighty Real Madrid in the Champions League?

If you are Pep Guardiola, you give your players the day off.

"The players are at home with their families today. And then they'll send each other text messages, I imagine, and tomorrow we'll see each other," the Manchester City manager said on Monday, the day before he leads his team into the second leg of their round-of-16 matchup against the record 15-time European champions. Indeed, Guardiola gave off a relaxed air as he talked about the "massive" task facing City on Tuesday after their implosion in the first leg in Madrid last week, when Federico Valverde scored a brilliant first-half hat trick. It could have been 4-0 but for Vinicius Junior who missed a penalty.

Real Madrid has named Kylian Mbappe in the touring party. Also included was England midfielder Jude Bellingham, who has been sidelined since Feb. 1 because of a thigh injury.

Before kick-off at Stamford Bridge, many eyes will be on Chelsea's players to see if they try to do another team huddle around the centre spot. In Paris last week, Chelsea huddled before kickoff in both halves and was booed by PSG fans the second time.

Arsenal host Bayer Leverkusen on Tuesday with the teams tied 1-1 and shapes as the most likely to represent Europe's richest league in the quarterfinals.

The remarkable Norwegian underdogs Bodo/Glimt take a 3-0 lead to Sporting Lisbon. If Bodo/Glimt go through then Arsenal or Leverkusen will be next to visit the 8,000-seat Aspmyra Stadium inside the Arctic Circle for the first leg on April 7 or 8. Real Madrid and Bayern are on course to meet in the knockout phase for the 11th time in the Champions League era that started in 1992. AGENCIES

> **"I am not much concerned about the chances we are going to create, I am pretty sure that we are able to do it. At home we are always able to do it. It is more about how well we are going to defend."**
> —**Pep Guardiola,** CITY MANAGER

80 Vinicius (25 years and 248 days) could become the youngest player to reach 80 appearances in the Champions League proper, surpassing Kylian Mbappe's mark of 26 years and 33 days.

56 Erling Haaland has scored 56 goals in 57 Champions League appearances and ten in his previous 11 games against Spanish teams in the competition.

11 Chelsea have lost only one of their 11 UEFA home matches against French opposition (W7 D3) and have won the last three.

Tonight's matches
Arsenal (1) vs Leverkusen (1); Chelsea (2) vs PSG (5); Man City (0) vs Real Madrid (3); Sporting (0) vs Bodo/Glimt (3)
*** First-leg scores in brackets**

SZOBOSZLAI WARNS TIME AGAINST REDS

Liverpool: Dominik Szoboszlai believes Liverpool are "running out of time" in their bid to secure Champions League qualification after yet again dropping points late in a match.

The Hungary captain said he understood why many fans left Anfield early — as some did even before Richarlison scored in the 90th minute to snatch a 1-1 Premier League draw for struggling Tottenham on Sunday — but urged them to stand by Arne Slot's side. They did gain one place and one point over Chelsea but conceding a goal in the 90th minute or later for the eighth time this season proved costly.

EPL

"If I knew the answer I would be the first one to go to the team and say it," said Szoboszlai when asked why Liverpool continue to drop late points.

"A couple of weeks ago we had a talk between each other saying 'Guys we don't have such a lot of time to do this right so we have to to go in a way that we want to play Champions League'," added the Hungary captain, whose first-half free-kick gave Liverpool the lead.

12 Liverpool have conceded 12 goals after the 80th minute of league games this season, the joint most in the division. Those conceded in the 90th or later have cost them 11 points.

Red-hot Vyasa best bet for main event

Hyderabad: G Sandeep-trained Vyasa is expected to win the Onnu Onnu Onnu Plate (Div I) over 1400 metres, the main event at the races on Monday. First race at 3 pm.

SELECTIONS: 1. Narayanpet Plate (Div I) 1100M: LA Quinta 1, Red Hot Punch 2 **2. Flirting Vision Republic Plate 1200M:** Dream To Fly 1, Assured Success 2 **3. Onnu Onnu Plate (Div I) 1400M:** Vyasa 1, Decoy 2 **4. Mossy Bank Plate 1400M:** Bhairava 1, Clara 2 **5. Hyderabad Plate 1100M:** Fugo 1, Varttamaan 2 **6. Onnu Onnu Onnu Plate (Div II) 1400M:** Northern Waves 1, Cherie Chevalier 2 **7. Narayanpet Plate (Div II) 1100M:** Authoritarian 1, Victory Run 2

Day's best: Northern Waves **1st Jackpot:** 2, 3, 4, 6, & 7. **1st Mini jackpot**: 1, 2, 3 & 4; **2nd Mini Jackpot**: 4, 5, 6 & 7. **1st Treble:** 2, 3, & 4; **2nd Treble**: 5, 6, & 7.

ESPIONAGE CLINCHES FEATURE

Espionage — from the stables of Donald Netto — and ridden by Kuldeep Singh won the Time And Place Plate, the feature event of the Hyderabad races on Monday. TNN

Bhagirathi to take on Infosys in final

TIMES NEWS NETWORK

Bengaluru: Bhagirathi Group reached the final of the KSCA Group II (Div II) league-cum-knockout tournament here recently. They scored a nine-wicket win over Continental Automotive Cricket Club to set up a title-decider date with Infosys Cricket Club, who eased past BEL Sports Club by a similar margin in the other semifinal.

Bhagirathi's decision to bowl paid dividends as Continental Automotive were bundled out for 101 runs. Santosh Singh, Melu Kumar and Aaron Joseph scalped two wickets each for Bhagirathi, who saw off the target in the 13th over. Aarav Mahesh (51 n.o) led the charge with an unbeaten half-century, which included six fours and one six in his 34-ball knock. Opener Aaron Joseph chipped in with an unbeaten 37.

Infosys dominated the other semifinal from the outset. BEL, who opted to bat, lost four wickets in the first six overs. After being further reduced to 37/6 in the ninth over, they never really recovered and were dismissed for 61 runs in 14.1 overs. Ajay Bhide (3-12) and Vineeth B (3-6) were the pick of the bowlers.

Infosys did not take much time to chase down the target with opener Swaroop SH (33n.o) seeing his team home in the eighth over.

Brief scores: Continental Automotive CC: 101 all out in 20 overs (Krishnamurthy T 25, Karthik J 30; Santosh Singh 2-15, Melu Kumar 2-19, Aaron Joseph 2-20) lost to **Bhagirathi Group: 102/1 in 12.3 overs** (Aaron Joseph 37 n.o, Aarav Mahesh 51 n.o.)

BEL SC: 61 all out in 14.1 overs (Ajay Bhide 3-12, Vineeth B 3-6) lost to **Infosys CC: 62/1 in 7.5 overs** (Swaroop SH 33n.o).

Piyal Bhattacharjee

BREAK THROUGH: Punjab FC's Leon Augustine (C) tries to get past two FC Goa defenders during their ISL match in the Capital on Monday

Goa held by Punjab

New Delhi: Punjab FC held FC Goa to a 1–1 draw in their Indian Super League clash at the Jawaharlal Nehru Stadium on Monday.

Punjab took the lead in the 27th minute when striker Nsungusi Effiong finished calmly after being set up by Manglenthang Kipgen. The Punjab scorer received a red card in the 48th minute. The hosts looked in control but FC Goa struck back with Dejan Drazic scoring the equaliser in the 53rd minute. TNN

Sinner, Sabalenka take main course in desert

Indian Wells: Jannik Sinner beat Daniil Medvedev in the Indian Wells final 7-6 (6), 7-6 (4) on Sunday, winning seven straight points to rally from a 4-0 deficit in the second-set tiebreak and claim the title without dropping a single set. The No. 2-ranked Italian beat Medvedev for the ninth time in their last 10 matches to claim his first title at the California tournament. Medvedev handed top-seeded Carlos Alcaraz his first loss of the year in the semis of the BNP Paribas Open.

INDIAN WELLS

SABALENKA

SINNER

Sinner congratulated fellow Italian Kimi Antonelli, who won the Chinese Grand Prix earlier Sunday. "It has been a special day for Italy," Sinner said. "Because I'm a huge F1 fan and having a very, very young Italian, Kimi, bringing Italy back home at the top, it's amazing. So, thanks, Kimi."

World No. 1 Aryna Sabalenka beat Elena Rybakina 3-6, 6-3, 7-6 (6) in the women's final for her first Indian Wells title. Sabalenka, a runner-up in 2023 and '25, finished off the win with a big serve that Rybakina hit long. It was a sweltering afternoon on the court as the temperatures soared into the 90s. The 27-year-old Sabalenka had a chance to close out the third set but was broken at 5-4.

Meanwhile, Novak Djokovic has withdrawn from the Miami Open with a right shoulder injury, organizers said Sunday. AGENCIES

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INDIA'S LARGEST ENGLISH NEWSPAPER

T20 World Cup-winning captain Suryakumar Yadav says India's talent pool in shortest format is so vast that it could comfortably field two or three int'l-quality teams at the same time

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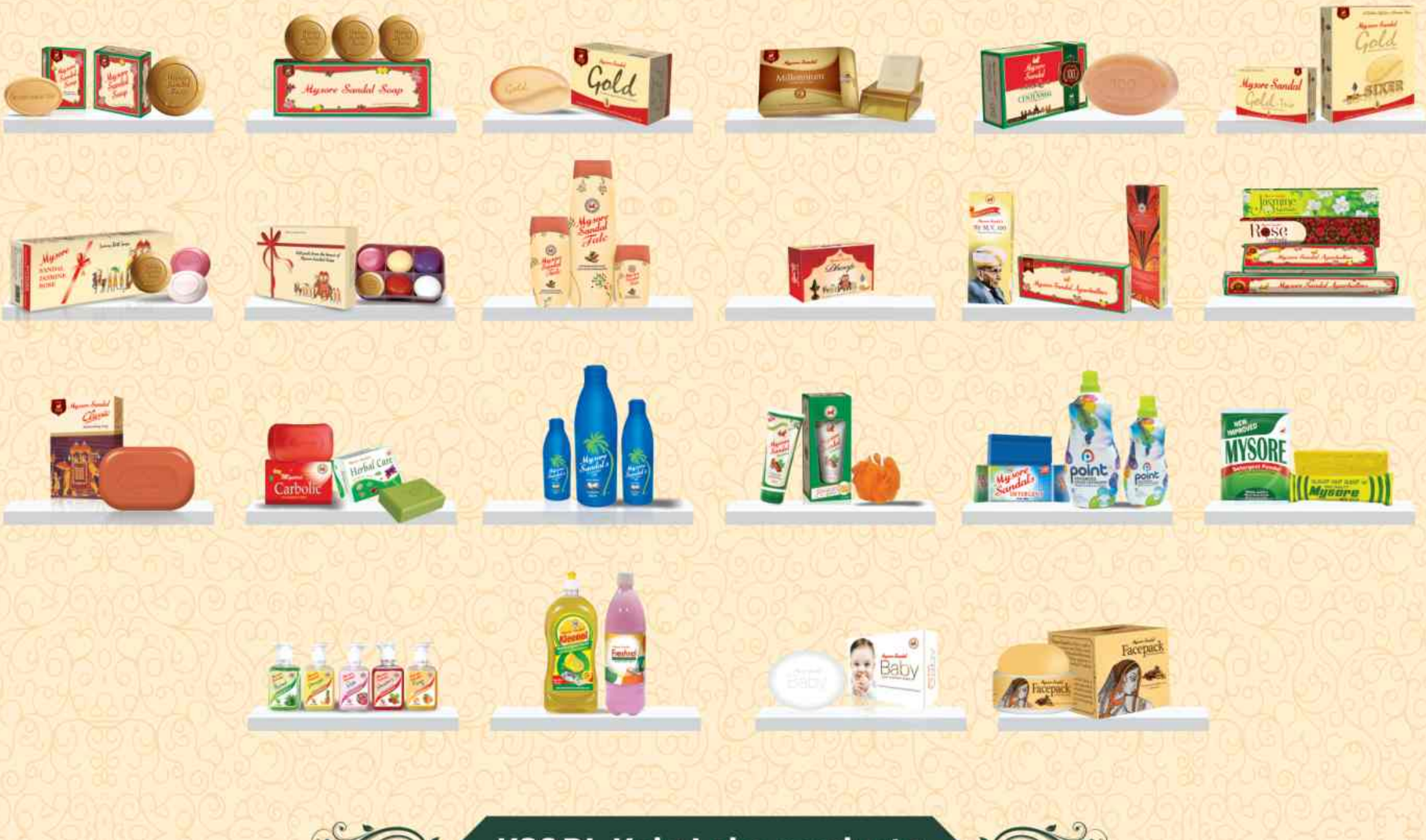

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